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THE PROPER MODE OF CONDUCTING MISSIONS TO THE HEATHEN.

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A

**SERMON** OF THE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

**Society for Propagating the Gospel**

AMONG THE

INDIANS AND OTHERS IN NORTH AMERICA,

NOVEMBER 5, 1829.

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BY BENJAMIN B. WISNER,

PASTOR OF THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH IN BOSTON.

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BOSTON: PUTNAM & HUNT.

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1829.

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AT a meeting of the Society, November 5th, 1829.

*Voted*, That the SECRETARY and TREASURER be a committee to present the thanks of the Society to the Rev. Dr. Wisner for his Sermon delivered before them this day, and to request a copy for the press

ALDEN BRADFORD, *Secretary*.

## SERMON.



MICAH IV, 1—4.

*In the last days, it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills ; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob ; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths : for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off : and they shall beat their swords into plough-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks ; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit, every man under his vine and under his fig-tree ; and none shall make them afraid : for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.*

IN this, as in many other passages of holy Scripture, is predicted a period, when genuine Christianity, with its blessed influences on the temporal condition and the eternal prospects of men, shall be diffused among all nations : A period, when the benefits of intellectual and moral elevation shall be every where enjoyed ; when the true God shall, every where, be known, and worshipped, and obeyed ; when the duties of domestic, and social, and civil relations shall be, every where, understood and performed ; when governments shall be modelled and administered on just and benevolent principles ; when war and its attendant miseries shall have entirely ceased, and tyranny, oppression, persecution, bigotry, and cruelty be done away ; when business shall be conducted without contention, dishonesty

and covetousness,—with the design to promote the *permanent* interests of those engaged in it, and the general good ; when the families of the earth shall be the abodes of piety, and comfort, and love ;—a period when “ the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea,” and “ the people shall be all righteous,” and “ all the ends of the world shall see ” and rejoice in “ the salvation of our God.” Mighty, indeed, must be the revolution that shall accomplish all this. But let not the benevolent heart despond. “ The mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it :” and “ that which he hath spoken, he will also bring to pass ; that which he hath purposed, he will also do.”

How will he accomplish the glorious result ?

The efficient agency will be that of the Holy Spirit, whose office it is to give to men the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, and make them willing in the day of his power. “ Not by might, nor by power, but *by my Spirit*, saith the Lord of hosts.” “ And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, that *I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh* ;” and then “ that great and notable day of the Lord ” shall “ come.”

But God usually works by means. He has uniformly, hitherto, dispensed spiritual blessings to men by the instrumentality of their fellow-men ; and this gracious method of procedure, there is no reason to expect, will be discontinued. We are expressly assured it will be employed in effecting the glorious result predicted in our text. “ The law ” is to “ go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.” The change foretold in the character and condition of the nations, is to be effected by means of “ the law,” and “ the word of the Lord.” And these are to “ go forth of Zion,” and “ from Jerusalem :” the means which it has been determined to employ, are to be put and continued in operation, by those already blessed with the knowledge and the happy influences of the true religion.

It must, then, be interesting to every Christian, and to every philanthropist living in a Christian country, to inquire, how is this instrumentality to be employed? To what end, and in what manner, shall we direct our efforts, that they may contribute most efficiently to the extension of religion and happiness among the nations? Shall our primary object be to civilize\* or to christianize them? And when we come to teach them the doctrines of religion,—whether at the commencement of our efforts for their improvement, or at a subsequent period,—shall we inculcate only the simpler and more general principles of our faith? or shall we, at once, present and urge upon their acceptance its most sublime and distinctive truths?

Let us give to these questions a brief and candid examination.

I. *First.* In employing our instrumentality to extend the temporal and spiritual blessings of christianity to the uncivilized and idolatrous nations of the earth, SHALL WE MAKE IT OUR PRIMARY OBJECT TO CIVILIZE OR TO CHRISTIANIZE THEM?

On this point, you are aware that directly opposite opinions have been advanced and advocated, by persons professing the same desire to witness the universal diffusion of civilization and genuine religion. On the one hand, it has been maintained, that the way “to teach Christianity to barbarous and savage nations” is, to “begin with civilizing them—educating and instructing them in the useful arts.”† “The order of providence clearly recommends, that those children of penury should first get into easier circumstances, and then be made converts to religious tenets.”‡ “It is

\* Uncivilized Heathen are chiefly referred to in this discourse, because the efforts of the Society before which it was preached, for the conversion of the Heathen, are, by its charter, required to be directed to the North American Indians. As, however, many of the remarks to be made will be equally applicable to missions among civilized Heathen, these will be incidentally referred to.

† Edinburgh Review, Vol. 21—page 66. ‡ Do. Vol. 8—page 434.



by *this* kind of practical instruction alone, that those in a certain state of ignorance and barbarism are to be gained over to the truth ; and, till a similar course is followed, our Missionary and our Bible societies may expend thousands and tens of thousands, to no purpose, but to manifest the goodness of their intentions, and their total ignorance of the means which ought to have been pursued.”\* On the other hand, it is contended, that, in all our efforts to meliorate the condition of idolatrous and savage nations, we should make it our *first* and *great* object to christianize them ; carrying with us, indeed, and recommending by example and instruction, the arts and comforts of civilized life, but making their improvement in these respects only a secondary thing,—viewing it as a result that will be easily attained, and will follow, almost of course, when they are brought to receive in their hearts the softening and elevating truths of religion.

Which of these directly opposite views is correct ?

The readiest and most satisfactory way to decide the question is to appeal to facts. We might, indeed, argue from the nature of the case ; and shew, we think conclusively, that true civilization can be effected only by changing the dispositions of barbarians ; and that the most direct, and in fact the only efficient method of accomplishing this, is to bring the powerful motives of the Gospel to bear directly on their hearts. But we are not particularly fond of *a priori* reasoning, and have no disposition to resort to it, however easily and successfully it might be done, when we can appeal to facts. And on this subject there are facts in abundance, furnished by an experience of eighteen hundred years. To facts, therefore, we appeal.

1. And the first fact to which I would direct your attention is, the striking and very instructive one, that, *in the*

\* Edinburgh Review, Vol. 21—page 66. See also the Discourse preached before this Society, in 1823, by the Rev. Thaddeus Mason Harris, D. D. pp. 8, 9.



commission given to the Apostles and their successors by the Saviour, and in the history transmitted to us in the New Testament of its early execution, there is not one word about civilizing men ; although the Gospel was to be, and was in fact, carried by the Apostles to savage tribes as well as to the then civilized nations.\* The command of the Savior is, “ Go ye,”—not to the nations which have been prepared for your coming by civilization,—but, “ Go ye into all the world,”—to savages as well as to civilized men.—And do what ? First civilize those whom you find sunk in barbarism, and teach the true philosophy to those whom you find more refined ; † and thus prepare them for receiving my religion ? No ; but, “ Go ye into all the world, and *preach the Gospel to every creature.*” To all alike, savage and civilized, proclaim, at once and continually, the good news of salvation through my atoning blood. And the history of the proceedings of the Apostles in executing this commission, under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit, among savage as well as civilized nations, is,—not that they abstained from “ preaching christianity,” till they had taught the civilized the true philosophy, and the barbarous “ the emolient arts of life ;” but, “ they went forth, and *preached every where,*” that men “ should *repent, and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance ;*” “ *not knowing any thing among*” those to whom they went, from the beginning to the end of their continuance with them, “ *save Jesus Christ, and him crucifi-*

\* Paul, we know from Galatians i, 17, preached the Gospel in Arabia. There is also reason to believe that he visited Spain on the same benevolent errand. And if he did not introduce Christianity into Britain, there is satisfactory evidence that it was successfully propagated among its then barbarous inhabitants in the age of the Apostles. In the same age also, and no doubt by the Apostles, Christianity was introduced among several of the then uncivilized tribes north and east of Palestine.

† This, it has been maintained, should be the first step in attempting to propagate Christianity among civilized Heathen. “ Instead of sending missionaries for the immediate purpose of preaching Christianity, even in its simple elements, let the remuneration that is now divided among twenty, be given to two, or to three, who shall be educated for the service. Let them be made masters of natural philosophy in all its branches. Let them be thoroughly acquainted with the science of metaphysics. Let them be deeply read in history. Let them be, at the same time, what are called practical men ; men who know the world, and human nature. And, let

ed." And, though "the Jews required a sign, and the Greeks sought after wisdom " or philosophy, yet they "*preached Christ crucified* ; counting that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

Now, with these facts in view, can it be believed that it was the intention of Jesus Christ, that his Apostles should make it the first object of their labors among idolatrous and barbarous tribes to civilize them, and among Heathen nations already civilized to teach them the true philosophy, and thus prepare them for the reception of his religion ; and that the Apostles did in fact proceed thus in executing his commission ? How manifest is it that he intended they should, and that they did in fact, make it their first and great object among all people to whom they went, savage as well as civilized, to make known to them, and to press upon their immediate acceptance, the true religion ? And this command is the commission and the directory, and the proceedings of the Apostles in executing it are the model, of all propagators of Christianity among the nations, to the end of the world.

But, I hear it said, " That was the age of miracles." And what if it was ? Does that fact render the commission of Christ and the example of the Apostles no guide to us ? Where, then, is the commission under which we are to act, and the inspired example we are to follow, in completing

them be Christians, without any of the narrowness of bigotry. Let these men be sent, to be companions, and friends, and teachers, among *enlightened* Mahomedans and Heathens. Let them go among them, to live as Heathens live, in regard to all that is innocent ; and to impart, to those who are capable of receiving it, a knowledge of the history, and of the philosophy, which are received in the Christian world. A few such missionaries, I think, would, in no long time, do much to unsettle, and raise the whole foundation of Brahminical faith, in minds which could act directly and powerfully, as Europeans or Americans cannot act, upon the lower orders of society. And in no long time might they be instrumental of filling its place with the pure and more rational faith of the Gospel. I believe, indeed, that they would at least do more, within a few years, in preparation for the extension of Christianity, than a hundred missionaries, employed as most missionaries now are, would accomplish in a century." Christian Examiner, Vol. 1—pp. 190, 191.

the work of spreading the blessings of Christianity through the earth ? And where is the place in which Jesus Christ or his Apostles have said, or intimated, that a different method was to be pursued in propagating his religion when miracles should cease ? And who can believe that they intended that the benevolent work should be continued till it is completed, and that such a change in the method of proceeding would be indispensable, and yet not an intimation of it is to be found, in the discourses of the Saviour, or in the writings of the Apostles ?

Nor is this the only radical mistake involved in your objection. It implies, if it has any force, that miracles have a direct and certain efficacy in the conversion of men. How, then, was it that the great body of the Israelites who passed through the Red Sea, and stood at the foot of Sinai, and witnessed Jehovah's continual wonders in the wilderness, remained in unbelief ? How was it that the cities in which most of the Saviour's mighty works were done, incurred a heavier doom than Sodom and Gomorrah ? How is it that miracles are never again to be wrought in effecting the accomplishment of God's gracious designs respecting this rebellious world ? The truth is, miracles never were the direct instrument in the conversion of men. They were, in fact, and were intended to be, to those in whose presence they were wrought, precisely what they are to us who are furnished with undoubted evidence of their having been wrought, viz. an attestation to the divine commission of the Prophets and Apostles, whose instructions were delivered orally to the first converts to Christianity, and have been transmitted to us in the holy Scriptures : *by which instructions*, accompanied with the efficacious grace of the Spirit, converts were made in Apostolic times, and are to be made in all ages of the world. And these instructions, sanctioned by the very attestation which sanctioned them when first



delivered, we have in our hands ; and may employ, in enlightening and saving the nations, just as they were employed by the Apostles.

The objection is, then, of no validity ; and the evidence of the facts to which I have adverted remains unimpaired, and direct, and conclusive ; evincing, that it is the will of Jesus Christ, and the direction of his inspired Apostles, that, in labouring for the temporal and spiritual improvement of the idolatrous and barbarous nations, we make it our primary object to Christianize them.

2. And now, let us look, *secondly*, at the testimony of facts that have taken place since the times of the Apostles. And here, I will pass over the various efforts that have been made in other ages for the spread of Christianity, and direct your attention, at once, to the benevolent exertions of the present day. And this I do, not because the ages which succeeded the Apostles, down to the present, furnish no facts to my purpose. All the facts which they present, at all applicable to the subject, are directly to my purpose.\* But we have not time for so extended an examination. And, of the experience of uninspired men, that must be most valuable to us, which has been had in the very circumstances in which we wish to be instructed how to proceed. And this, too, is, emphatically, the age of missionary effort ; and, I add without the fear of being contradicted by any man who has knowledge on the subject, of missionary success.

\* The venerable ELIOT has been adduced as a witness in favour of the plan of proceeding against which the argument is here directed, inasmuch as he formed the Indians, among whom he laboured with such Apostolic zeal and success, into a little community, and gave them a simple institute of civil polity, and had them taught various domestic and mechanic arts. See the Sermon before this Society in 1823. But to make the example in point, the advocates for first civilizing the Indians, should shew, that Eliot deferred efforts to instruct them in the Christian religion till after they were in a measure civilized. But this they can never do. While instructing them in domestic and mechanic arts, he was every day preaching to them ; and using other means to bring them under the transforming influence of Christian doctrines. This was always his *primary* object. And so it was with BRAINARD, and the MAYHEWS, and all others, who, in the last and preceding centuries, laboured so successfully to reform and Christianize the North American Indians.

In no age since the Apostles, have such exertions been made, and in none has so much been effected, in spreading the Gospel through the earth. The standard of the cross has been planted in every clime, and on every shore. Hundreds of thousands of children and adults have been brought under Christian instruction. Thousands and tens of thousands of souls have, hopefully, been born again, among pagan and barbarous nations. Whole countries have cast away their idols, and received Jehovah as their God. And of a whole people, who were, within the memory of some of us, sunk in the lowest depths of barbarism and idolatry, it is declared, by the very best authority, that they are now the most thoroughly Christian of any entire nation on the earth.\* What, then, is the testimony of this age on the subject before us ?

In answering the question, I am compelled to express my unfeigned regret, that I cannot adduce the results of any experiments made by the advocates of the first of the plans we are examining. They have said much about the want of wisdom, and the waste of zeal and treasure and lives, in those who have been aiming directly at Christianizing the nations. But no one of them has yet been found having the practical, matter-of-fact benevolence, to renounce the pleasures of country and of home, and take his life in his hand, and go forth to some barbarous nation, and exhibit the folly of the plan of proceeding he condemns, by shew-

\* See letters of the deputation of the London Missionary Society—Messrs. Tyreman and Bennett, from the Society Islands. “A nation of pilferers,” they say, “have become eminently trust-worthy. A people, formerly universally addicted to lasciviousness, have become modest and virtuous in the highest degree. Those who, a few years ago, despised all forms of religion except their own horrid and cruel superstitions, have universally declared in favour of Christianity ; study diligently those parts of the Christian Scriptures which have been translated, ask earnestly for more, and appear conscientiously to regulate themselves by the sacred oracles.” A similar revolution, much more rapid and nearly as complete, has been effected by the blessing of God on the American mission at the Sandwich Islands ; and results equally delightful are fast producing, by the same means, among the Cherokee and Choctaw nations of Indians, and among various other, civilized and uncivilized, Heathens.

ing, in actual results, the superior wisdom of his own. Now we say, in the sincerity of our hearts, we do exceedingly regret this. For we should love to witness the benevolent acts, as well as to read the benevolent effusions, of these men. We should love to have them brought out from the uncertainties of speculation about their favourite scheme, into the region of sober fact. And we should love, in this discussion, to give, honestly and fairly, the results of their labours. But this they have not enabled us to do : and we must content ourselves with examining the experiments that have been made by others.

And in doing this, we might refer to the history of missions carried on of late years, by any or all of the different denominations of evangelical Christians ; and from all we should receive the same unequivocal and decisive testimony. I shall direct your attention, however, to the missions of but a single denomination,—the MORAVIANS. And this I shall do, chiefly, for two reasons : *first*, because their efforts for the propagation of Christianity have been made, for the most part, among savages in the very lowest state of degradation, where no allowance can be required for any preparation in their previous condition ; and, *secondly*, because, it is agreed, on all hands, that they have been the most judicious and successful of all the supporters of modern missions. Says a decided advocate of the views opposed in this discourse, “ Of all who have attempted to teach Christianity to barbarous and savage nations, the Moravian brethren may fairly be placed at the head.”\* “ They have, more than any other proselytizing institution or division of Christians, united wisdom with their pious earnestness to convert the Heathen.” † What, then, has been the course pursued by the Moravians ? and what is the testimony of their experience on the subject before us ?

\* Edinburgh Review—Vol. 21, page 66. † Do.—Vol. 8, page 437.



They began their missions to the Heathen in 1732 : and, though a very small denomination, with exceedingly limited pecuniary resources, in 1822, they had, in various Heathen countries, more than *thirty* settlements, in which were employed about *an hundred and sixty* missionaries, having the care of more than *twenty-eight thousand converts*.\* These settlements are in Greenland, in North and South America, in the West Indies, in Tartary, Persia, and Egypt, in the Islands of the Indian ocean, and in southern Africa. And in all of them, you will see well-organized and happy communities ;—the filthy Hottentot and Greenlander, exhibiting the decencies of civilized life—the roving savage of America divested of his irregular habits and his barbarous cruelty ; all furnishing a beautiful exemplification of the morality and the spirit of genuine Christianity.

And now by what process have these delightful results been produced ? A certain philosophical traveller,† having visited their stations in South Africa, and being delighted with the visible effects of their labours, without observing or inquiring in what manner they were prosecuted, set himself to speculate on the principles from which such results must have originated ; and, upon his return to his native country, published to the world that “ the Moravians, instead of preaching to the natives the mysterious parts of the Gospel, instructed them in useful and industrious habits ; instead of building a church, they erected a storehouse. And their labours were crowned with complete success.” This testimony was eagerly caught up by a certain distinguished periodical, and held forth to the public as convincing evidence, that the only way to effect the eventual conversion of pagan and barbarous nations is first to civilize them.‡ But the Moravians themselves, whom the reviewer meant to compliment, “ felt themselves insult-

\* United Brethrens' Missionary Intelligencer, 1822, page 3.      † Barrow.

‡ Edinburgh Review, Vol. 8—page 432.

ed by his eulogium, and were the first to come forward and deny his assertions.”\* And no one at all acquainted with the history of their missions needs be told, that his statements were utterly without foundation. They have always acted on the directly opposite system. They have, indeed, carried with them, among the savage tribes to whom they have gone, the arts and usages of civilized life ; and these they have recommended, by their example, and, to some extent, by their instructions. But this has always been with them a secondary object ; their *principal* efforts, wherever they go in the prosecution of their benevolent work, being, at once and continually, directed to the communication of the knowledge and the sanctifying power of Christian truth.

The first question is, therefore, decided by the word of God, and by the continued testimony of his providence and his grace. If we would successfully employ our instrumentality in extending among the idolatrous nations of the earth the temporal and spiritual blessings which we enjoy, we must make it our direct and primary object to *Christianize* them.

II. We proceed to inquire, *secondly*, in endeavouring to Christianize the nations of the earth, what method shall we pursue ? SHALL WE TEACH THEM, AT FIRST, ONLY THE SIMPLER AND MORE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF OUR RELIGION ? OR SHALL WE, AT ONCE, PRESENT AND URGE UPON THEIR ACCEPTANCE ITS MOST SUBLIME AND DISTINCTIVE TRUTHS ? †

On this point, also, you are aware that directly opposite opinions have been advanced and advocated, by persons professing the same desire to see the blessed influences of Christianity universally diffused. On the one hand, it is maintained, that missionaries ought to bring out at once, and continu-

\* Memoirs of John Urquhart, Vol. 1—page 93. † The reasoning under this head is, throughout, as applicable to civilized as to uncivilized Heathen.

ally to make most prominent, in their instructions to the Heathen, and to urge upon their attention with tender and persevering earnestness, the great peculiarities of the Christian system, the incarnation of the Son of God, the propitiation made in his blood for the sins of the world, the lost condition of unrenewed men, the necessity of their renovation by the Holy Spirit, and the endless happiness or misery depending on the character formed in the present life. On the other hand it is contended, that those who are labouring for the conversion of the Heathen, will be “far more likely to promote among them the cause of religion and virtue, if, instead of inculcating these mysterious doctrines, they would enforce on the attention of their hearers those divine precepts which embody the principles of a morality the purest and most perfect the world has ever known.”\* A radical mistake, it has been alledged, in the conductors of modern missions has been, that, “instead of adapting instruction to the capacity and powers of comprehension of the ignorant Heathen,—nay, instead even of teaching them ‘which be the first principles of the oracles of God,’ they commenced with inculcating those sublime doctrines which the most cultivated minds must be expanded to comprehend, and made the belief of profound mysteries the first requisite;” “while others, still more inconsistently, introduced the abstruse dogmas of metaphysical theology, which puzzle the intellect, instead of the simple and intelligible moral precepts of the Gospel, which have a reforming and purifying influence on the temper and conduct.”†

Which of these directly opposite views is correct?

In answering the question, we appeal, as before, not to *a priori* reasonings, but to facts.

I. And we again refer you, *first*, to the example of the

\* Memoirs of Urquhart, Vol. 1—page 84. † Sermon preached before this Society in 1823, by Thaddeus Mason Harris, D. D., page 11.



*Apostles.* Their efforts for the conversion of the Heathen were, every where, attended with immediate and most wonderful success. And this result, we have seen, was effected, not by the direct instrumentality of the miracles they wrought, but of the religious truths which they inculcated, and which we are to inculcate, among the nations.

In what order and method, then, did they inculcate the Christian doctrines? The Apostle of the Gentiles shall answer. "The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach CHRIST CRUCIFIED; unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ, *the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*" "When I came to you, I came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God: for I determined not to know ANY thing among you, save JESUS CHRIST, and him CRUCIFIED." "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." This most successful propagator of Christianity among Pagan nations, acting under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit, made the atonement accomplished by the humiliation and death of the Son of God, wherever he went, the grand and prominent subject of his instructions. And so did all the Apostles. And in doing this, they were, and were intended by the Spirit who guided them to be, models for all propagators of Christianity among the nations to the end of the world. What more direct and convincing evidence can be desired that, if we would secure the blessing of God to give efficacy to our efforts for the conversion of the Heathen, we must make the atonement of Christ the great and prominent subject of our instructions?

2. And now look again, *secondly*, at the testimony furnished by the history of modern missions. And here, too, I might refer you to the experience of any, or of all the de-

nominations of evangelical Christians who have, of late years, been actively engaged in sending the Gospel to the Heathen, and present you with the same unequivocal and decisive testimony. But, as before, I shall direct your attention only to the Moravians. And this I shall do, not only for the reasons stated in the former instance, but also for the additional one, that, of both the methods of procedure now under examination, these devoted servants of Christ have made a thorough trial.

Their second mission was established in Greenland, in 1733.\* And for a series of years, using at the same time every means to gain the confidence and affection of the savages around them, they were most assiduous in teaching them only such truths of the Christian system as are commonly regarded as of a preliminary nature,—the being and character of God, the creation of the world, the fall of man, and the requirements of the divine law. And what was the effect of this, apparently, most rational mode of proceeding, pursued with a fidelity and a patience which will never be surpassed? “Shew us,” their auditors would say, “the God you describe, then we will believe in him, and serve him. You represent him as so great that we cannot come near him, neither will he trouble himself about us. We have prayed to him when we were sick, or had nothing to eat, but he heard us not. What you say of him, therefore, we think, is not true; or, if you know him better than we do, then do ye, by your prayers, obtain for us plenty of food, health of body, and a dry house; for these are all the things we either desire, or want. We have healthy souls already; we need nothing but a sound body, and enough to eat. You are a different kind of people from us. In your country, perhaps, persons may have diseased souls: we have proof of this, indeed, in those who come hither; they are good for nothing; they may, therefore, stand in

\* Their first mission, to St. Thomas in the West Indies, had been commenced in the preceding year.

need of a Saviour and a physician for the soul. Your heaven and your spiritual pleasures may be good enough for you ; but they would be tiresome to us. We must have seals, and birds, and fishes ; these we shall not find in your heaven ; and therefore we will leave it to you, and the worthless part of the Greenlanders. As for us, we will go down to Torngarsuck ; there we shall find abundance of every thing, without toil or trouble.”\* “ If the missionaries tarried more than one night with them, they employed every species of art to entice them to their wanton, dissolute practices ; and when they failed in this, they endeavoured to weary and provoke them, by mocking and mimicking their reading, singing, praying, or by accompanying these sacred exercises with their hideous howling, or the beat of their drums. They took occasion, from their external poverty, to ridicule them with the keenest sarcasms ; and if the Brethren replied, that they did not come to Greenland for the sake of outward advantages, as good eating and drinking, but to teach them the will of God and the way to heaven, they taunted them, saying, ‘ Fine fellows, indeed, to be our teachers ! We know very well, ye yourselves are ignorant, and must learn your lesson from others.’ All this rudeness the Brethren bore with patience, meekness, and serenity : but the savages, instead of being softened by their gentle behaviour, were only encouraged to abuse them the more. They pelted them with stones, seized many of their goods, and shattered them to pieces. Nay, they were so cruel as to attempt to spoil their boat, or to drive it out to sea, which would have deprived them of their chief means of subsistence. And they even, with naked knives in their hands, threatened their lives.”†

At length, in 1738, five years after the commencement of their labours, there was a providential occurrence, destined

\* Brown's History of Missions, Vol. 1—page 305. † Do. Vol. 1—page 303.



to have a most important influence, not only on this mission, but on the conversion of the Heathen throughout the world. Some Southlanders happened to visit the Brethren, as one of them was writing out a fair copy of a translation of the Gospel. They were curious to know what was in the book ; and, on hearing read the history of Christ's agony in the garden, one of the savages, named KAIARNAK, stepped up to the table, and in an earnest, affecting manner, said, 'How was that ? Tell me it once more, for I also would fain be saved.' These words, the like of which the missionary had never heard from the lips of a Greenlander, penetrated his whole soul, so that the tears rolled down his cheeks, while he gave an account of the life and death of Christ, and of the plan of salvation through him ; describing, with more than ordinary force and energy, his sufferings in the garden and on the cross. The savages listened with fixed attention ; and some of them requested that they might be taught to pray : and when the missionaries did pray with them, they frequently repeated their expressions, that so they might not forget them. And, on leaving, they said they would come again, and hear of these things. And from that period, KAIARNAK made frequent visits to the Brethren, and at length took up his residence with them : and, after about a year, giving satisfactory evidence of a work of grace on his heart, he was received into the Church.

As yet, however, the missionaries had made no definite change in their method of instructing the people. And soon, KAIARNAK left them, to return to his countrymen in the South. After about a year's absence, he returned, to their unspeakable joy ; bringing with him a brother and his family ; and saying, that all he had heard from the missionaries he had made known to his countrymen ; that he had endeavoured, while absent, to hold communion with the Saviour ; and that he should never leave the Brethren again.

The missionaries now began to perceive the import of the dealings of God's providence and grace with them in the case of this individual. And the result was, a deliberate determination to make a material change in their manner of instructing the savages around them. From this period, 1740, they directed the attention of all to whom they could get access, "in the first instance, to Christ Jesus,—to his incarnation, his life, and especially his sufferings and death." And, immediately, was this method of instruction followed with signal and extended success. "It illuminated the darkened understandings" of the miserable objects of their benevolent exertions, "melted their stubborn hearts, and kindled in their cold icy breasts the flame of spiritual life."\*

Nor was this new mode of instruction confined to the Greenlanders. Similar views in relation to the relative importance of Christian doctrines had, about the same time, by some remarkable circumstances, been impressed on the minds of the Brethren at home.† The missionaries in Greenland gave speedy information of the change in their method of instruction, with its causes and effects. And the same method of proceeding was forthwith adopted in all the Moravian missions; and has, in all of them, been ever since pursued, with the same instructive and happy results. And now, the recorded testimony of these indefatigable and most successful labourers in converting the Heathen, is, that "experience has taught them, that little is effected by beginning," in attempting to propagate Chris-

\* This account of the Greenland mission is abridged from Brown's History of Missions, Vol. 1.—pp. 309—320.

† These circumstances are narrated in Cranz's History of the Brethren. They occurred at *Hurrnhut*, the principal residence of the Moravians, in 1734. From that period they have, in their discourses and in their devotional exercises, dwelt, much more than they had previously done, on the person and redemption of Christ, "especially the merits of his holy incarnation, life, passion and death, for reconciliation, and the sanctification of the human soul and body in all the circumstances of life, as their comfort and example." *Cranz*, § 120. See also the Liturgy and Hymns of the United Brethren, which every where exhibit this peculiar feature.

tianity among Pagans, "with the principles of natural religion, as the existence of God, the perfections of his nature, or the duties of morality, in order to prepare them for receiving the Gospel : " and that, "after many years trial, in different countries, and under every variety of circumstances, they have found, that the simple testimony of the sufferings and death of Christ, delivered by a missionary possessed of an experienced sense of his love, is the most certain and the most effectual method of converting the Heathen."\*

And now listen to the individual testimony of one of their most remarkable converts. He was a North American Indian. When the missionary came to his tribe "he was," says the history, "the greatest drunkard in the whole town ; he was quite outrageous in sin, and had even rendered himself a cripple by his debaucheries." But soon he was remarkably and permanently changed. "The drunkard had learned to be sober ; and the man, who was as savage as a bear, had become mild and peaceful as a lamb. He afterwards gave the Brethren the following simple" and instructive "account of his conversion. "I," said he, "have been a heathen, and have grown old among the heathen ; therefore I know how the heathen think. Once a preacher came, and began to tell us that there was a God. We answered him, saying, 'Dost thou think us so ignorant as not to know that ? Go back to the place from whence thou camest.' Then another preacher came to us, and began to say, 'You must not steal, nor lie, nor get drunk.' To him we answered, 'Thou fool ; dost thou think that we do not know that ? Learn first thyself, and then teach thy own

\* Brown's History of Missions, Vol. 2—pp. 107, 109. "It is proper, however, to remark," the historian adds, "that, though the Brethren make the death of Christ the grand subject of their preaching among the Heathen, they by no means confine their instructions to this particular point. There is no part of divine truth, whether of a doctrinal or practical nature, but what they endeavour, by degrees, to instil into the minds of their converts."

people to leave off these practices ; for who steal, or lie, or are more drunken, than the white men ?' Thus we dismissed him. After some time brother RAUCH\* came into my hut, and sat down by me. He then spoke to me as follows : ' I am come to you in the name of the Lord of heaven and earth. He sends to let you know that he will make you happy, and deliver you from that misery in which you at present lie. For this purpose He became a man, gave his life a ransom, and shed his blood for you.' When he had finished his discourse, he lay down upon a board, fatigued by his journey, and fell into a sound sleep. I then thought, ' What kind of a man is this ? There he sleeps. I might kill him, and throw him into the wood, and who would regard it ? But this gives him no care or concern.' At the same time, I could not forget his words. They constantly recurred to my mind. Even when I slept, I dreamed of that blood which Christ shed for us. I found this to be something different from what I ever heard before ; and I interpreted brother RAUCH's words to the other Indians. Thus, through the grace of God, an awakening began among us. *Brethren, preach Christ our Saviour, and his sufferings and death, if you would have your words to gain entrance among the heathen.*"†

I, surely, need not add another word. The position is demonstrated. The only effectual way to attempt the conversion of the Heathen is, at once, to preach to them, and urge upon their acceptance, the distinguishing doctrines of the Gospel, especially the incarnation of the Son of God, and his vicarious sufferings and death. This, and this alone, will illuminate their darkened understandings, melt their stubborn hearts, and kindle in their icy breasts the flame of spiritual life, and bring them to the enjoyment of the substantial blessings of civilization and true religion.

\* Christian Henry Rauch, the Moravian Missionary who had been instrumental in his conversion.

† Brown's History of Missions, Vol. 1—pp. 396, 397.



We see, then, brethren of this Society, what is our duty in the discharge of the sacred trust committed to us. We must employ, and send forth, to our destitute settlements, and to the Indian tribes, such missionaries, and only such, as have learned by experience, the deep moral ruin of the human race, and the subduing and transforming efficacy of redeeming love ; and, with hearts full of compassion for their perishing fellow-men and of zeal for the glory of Christ in their salvation, will, at once and continually, with the tenderest affection and at any sacrifice, endeavour to bring those to whom we send them to know and feel the power of the simple testimony of the dying of the Lord Jesus as the propitiation for our sins. If we persevere in this course, we shall obey the instructions of the providence and the word of God ; we shall be faithful to the trust committed to us ; we shall essentially contribute to the salvation and civilization of men. If we pursue a different course, we shall disregard the unequivocal directions of the providence and the word of God ; we shall be unfaithful to the trust reposed in us by those who contributed the funds committed to our care ; we shall bestow our labours in vain.

The Lord give us grace to be faithful ; and to pursue the course which he approves, and will attend with his effectual blessing.



## REPORT.

### OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE.

Published by a vote of the Society, Nov. 5th, 1829.

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During the year 1828, the same number of missionaries were employed, and in the same places, as for several preceeding years : And, excepting the teachers for a few small Indian tribes, they were employed in the State of Maine. From the first establishment of the Society, our missionaries have labored almost wholly in that part of the country. There were then, and since, always have been, many new settlements in Maine, the inhabitants of which were destitute of the stated means of religious instruction, and the most of whom emigrated from the old towns in Massachusetts. These considerations, probably, induced the first and early members of this Society to employ religious teachers in that region. The first missionary was Rev. Daniel Little, of Wells, who was peculiarly qualified for the employment, and very popular on account of his evangelical and catholic sentiments. He was employed several years, successively, viz. from 1789 to 1794 ; and his services were extensively useful. In many places which he visited, the people seemed to have lost a disposition for religious worship and instruction, in consequence of being long destitute of the means of grace ; and many families were without the sacred volume. He convinced them of the importance of maintaining the ordinances of the gospel ; and was instrumental in forming churches and inducing the people to ordain ministers in several places.

More recently, this and other similar societies, through their

missionaries, have been instrumental in forming churches and preparing for the settlement of learned ministers in various parts of Maine. There are still many new settlements, where the people need encouragement and aid from abroad, and who, without help from missionary Societies in this State, would probably long remain destitute of a preached gospel. In that part of the country, then, there seems to be an extensive field for missionary labors. New plantations are constantly making, and the claim upon the Society for assistance is equally strong, perhaps, as it was forty years ago.

It would be difficult, perhaps, to fix upon any particular year, in which much greater good had been done than in others. No testimony of our missionaries, in proof of such fact, is now recollected; and yet, in the lapse of the period above mentioned, which is that usually allowed for one generation, we have proof of the abundant fruits of our labours, which calls for devout gratitude to heaven, and for persevering efforts, on the part of the Society. By the preaching of our missionaries, and the distribution of the bible and tracts, under the divine blessing, Christian knowledge and virtue have been greatly extended. The good seed, sown in former years, has been since springing up and bearing fruit. The growth has been gradual, and sometimes slow; but, in most places it has taken deep root; and if duly watered and cultivated, we may humbly hope, will produce a richer harvest in future.

Perhaps, we are apt to expect too great or too early fruits of our labors for the moral and religious improvement of mankind. But we should not be discouraged nor relax in our efforts, for want of the success at first anticipated. The society, however, has just cause for persevering exertions in the course pursued in former years, by the early members of the association. And how great is the honor of being employed in this benevolent work—we are called to be workers together with our father in heaven, and with our divine master, in enlightening and reforming our fellow men. And if we have felt the sanctifying and consoling power of Christianity ourselves, if we “have tasted, that the Lord is gracious,” we shall cheerfully aid in imparting the gospel of grace and immor-



tality to our brethern of the human family, according to our ability and opportunities.

On an examination of the journals of the missionaries respecting their services, during the last year, the Select Committee have evidences of their fidelity and usefulness ; and there appears, on the whole, to be an increasing attention in the people, to their instructions. They were treated with kindness and respect ; and they received, for themselves and the Society, the fervent thanks of the people they visited.

Several of them, (particularly Mr. Nurse,) speak of the interest the people take in schools ; and they express an opinion of the advantage eventually to result, in a moral view, from an attention of the Society and its missionaries, to these establishments. This appears to have been, early, an object with the members of the Society ; and it has not been wholly neglected in late years. Our missionaries have been instructed to visit schools, to inquire into their condition, and to furnish children with spelling books, as well as Testaments and religious tracts. But it is respectfully suggested, whether still greater attention to the subject would not be proper and useful. Our missionaries usually render their services in summer, when the men, and in some cases, the women even, are so engaged in harvest or other labor in the field, that they seldom attend lectures delivered on week days. Besides family visits and occasional preaching, when the people could well attend, they might give a good deal of time to the examination of schools, and in advising and assisting the teachers. Their presence and their instructions would impart a beneficial influence.

In pursuance of an appointment, in May 1828, Rev. Jonathan Calef, of Lyman, performed one month's missionary service, in that and the neighboring town of Ossipee. It is stated in his report, that he spent three entire weeks in the latter place : that he preached two sermons on each Lord's day, and delivered five sermons on other days ; made six family visits a day, on an average ; and visited all the schools in the town. The church in Ossipee consists of forty seven members ; and the number of families which join in worship in the Congregational mode, are twenty-eight.

Mr. Calef says, these people do what they can for the support of the gospel ministry. He was received with great kindness in his visits ; and was requested to return and preach a longer time with them. Mr. Calef is of opinion, that a missionary might be very useful in Ossipee, as the people are very desirous of having religious instruction, and very attentive to the public ministration of the gospel. He received from individuals of that place, in produce and money, chiefly in the former, five dollars, and 75-100.

The residue of the term of his appointment, Mr. Calef devoted to his own people in Lyman, who, he says, "are few and poor." They allowed him only forty-eight dollars for the year, which he received principally in produce and labor. He expresses, for himself and people, much gratitude to this Society, for its aid for several years past ; as, without it, he must have taken a dismission from them and left the town. Mr. Calef has been in the employment of the Society many years, though generally for a short period every year. The proportion of Congregationalists in Lyman and the adjoining towns is small, and Mr. Calef has been very acceptable and useful among them. For the present year, Mr. Calef has had no appointment, as it was believed other places claimed attention.

The Rev. Mr. Nurse, of Ellsworth, had a mission at Mariaville, a new settlement in the neighborhood, for twelve weeks, with authority to employ some one as an assistant. He accordingly engaged Mr. Sylvester Clap, preceptor of the Academy at Blue Hill, in his vicinity, who spent four sabbaths and two whole weeks at Mariaville. Mr. Clap was well received by the people. He paid particular attention to their schools, and prevailed on the principal men to build a new school house. The report of Mr. Clap to Mr. Nurse is very minute and interesting. He visited the plantation twice in July, 1828, and again in May last. At his first visit, the men were so much occupied on their farms, that they seldom attended his preaching, except on the sabbath : and in May, the travelling was so bad as to prevent the attendance, even on the sabbath, of such as lived at a distance from the place where he preached. He says, however, "that a good number attended,

and were very serious in their deportment. According to the accounts, both of Mr. Clap and Mr. Nurse, there is an opening at this place for useful service. "The field is represented as white for harvest, and appearances indicate, that the Lord has many souls in this place." Mr. Nurse says that Mr. Clap's services were very acceptable. Mr. Clap himself says, that his feelings were so moved by a visit to a small and poor plantation, adjoining Mariaville, that he spent some time in getting a subscription for building a school house. Mr. Clap was unwell two days, while on his mission; but the residue of the time he appears to have assiduously devoted to the duties of his appointment. He visited the schools in plantations 26, 27, 30 and 33; and preached several lectures, and made numerous family visits. He says he was happy to find that every family in this wilderness had a bible. He visited some recently bereaved families—in one of which the widowed mother of a large family of children was in great distress on account of her own spiritual wants, as well as for the loss of an affectionate husband. He says, he exhibited such views of the Christian religion, as he deemed suitable to her condition, and as were calculated to impart consolation. After lamenting his feeble state of health, by which he was prevented two days from attending to the duties of his mission, he says, "this day is the sabbath, and I have preached three sermons to the people in No. 26. The house was crowded to overflowing. I have seldom had such an attentive audience. My emotions, on this occasion, induced me to say "it is good to be here."

Mr. Nurse spent four sabbaths himself at Mariaville, and preached ten sermons; one of which was before a society for the promotion of temperance. In the opinion of Mr. Nurse, this society is doing much good in the settlement. He states several instances of reformation which have occurred since its formation. Mr. Nurse says he was gratified, by the numbers which attended his preaching, and with their serious attention to his discourses; and he expresses a hope, that he has not labored in vain. Mr. Nurse was one sabbath on the Island of Mount Desert, "which, he says, though not strictly, perhaps, missionary ground, as there is a set-

tled minister there, he was induced to visit, as the Clergyman is aged and infirm, the people widely dispersed, and it being also a season of extraordinary attention to religion." He had however, previously visited the aged minister, who appeared highly pleased at seeing him, and invited him to preach to his people. Afterwards, having a request both from the minister and people, Mr. Nurse again visited Mount Desert; and he says, "the people were profoundly attentive." He hopes, the society will be willing to consider this time spent in its service. Mr. Nurse also performed missionary labor in the town of Hancock, adjoining Ellsworth, and preached several lectures, which, he says, were numerous and seriously attended." At the date of his letter in May last, Mr. Nurse proposed to spend two sabbaths more at Mariaville, to complete the appointment of last year; though he and his assistant, Mr. Clap, had preached in the place eight sabbaths, at Hancock one; one on Mount Desert, and had employed a young man from the Bangor Theological School one sabbath at Mariaville. From this place, Mr. Nurse received \$37 50; and from the people of Mount Desert, \$2 50; and he has given the society credit, as part of the compensation voted him, for \$40.

Rev. Mr. Kellogg of Portland says he was received at Perry, with open arms. He immediately began a course of family visits through the town, in which there is about one hundred: and continued, as he could redeem time from the Indian school. The inhabitants are scattered over a large territory; but have become attached to a central worship on the sabbath. Their attendance on the Lord's day exceeded that of former years. The people had begun a new meeting house, which, during the then ensuing season, he expected would be completed. "It inspirited him in his efforts," he says, "to see the people giving serious attention to sabbath exercises and coming from all parts of the town. Six years ago, Perry was a moral wilderness; without a priest and without an altar." "While in your service, including six weeks from the Massachusetts Missionary Society, I gave attendance to hrtee public schools, to the monthly concert of prayer, to a day of fasting and prayer, to a Bible class, to five funerals; formed a



tract and a temperate society, admitted three persons into the church, had four communion seasons, made 270 visits among the people, chiefly pastoral, laboring, by expounding the scriptures, by conversation and prayer, to bring home to every bosom the truth as "it is in Jesus." Mr. Kellogg preached at Lubec, near Perry, and administered the sacrament; he also preached one sabbath in Dennisville, and one in Robinstown, and delivered a sermon at the ordination of Mr. Church, in Calais. When Mr. Kellogg first visited that town, the Congregationalists had no existence as a body; but occasionally attended public worship, at St. Stephens, on the British side of the river St. Croix. They have now a house of worship and a respectable society. He hopes that the people of Perry, united with those of Robinstown, will soon settle a minister. Mr. Kellogg has given up the Indian school; but thinks, that, by being near, he may do something for the benefit of the Tribes. For the present year, Mr. Kellogg has had a mission of only two months.

The Rev. Freeman Parker, who was appointed for the term of two months in Dresden and vicinity, commenced his missionary labors in Pittston, an adjoining town, which is without a settled minister, but large in territorial extent, and has a considerable population. Mr. Parker has labored much in Pittston for several years; and occasionally administered the ordinances of the gospel there, and performed other pastoral duties. The church is small, but very anxious to hear preaching and to maintain gospel order. Mr. Parker preached in Pittston six sabbaths, and divided his time between the two distinct and populous parts of the town. He says, "he cannot state any mature change in the condition of the church and society since his preceding report; but that, on the whole, they are increasing in strength, if not in numbers. Though small, they are united, and heartily disposed to do all in their power to support and advance the cause of religion. They are now engaged in building a house for the worship of God; and hope to be able, in the course of the year, with some foreign aid, to settle a pastor and to enjoy the regular administration of the gospel, at least for two thirds of the time. The Lord bless and prosper them."

Mr. Parker preached in Dresden four sabbaths, and on several other days ; he also performed other ministerial and pastoral duties among the people of that town. Mr. Parker is not now the minister of Dresden, and he represents the church as "in a low and languishing state ; several members having lately deceased and some removed to other places. The few who remained, he says, appear to be discouraged, and to relax in their efforts"—and he subjoins a devout wish, "that God would revive his work, and strengthen the things which are ready to die." In consequence of his representation, Mr. Parker has, this year, been directed to preach in Pittston, and other destitute towns in the county of Lincoln.

The Rev. Silas Warren, of Jackson, was employed for one month in that place, and vicinity. He preached eighteen sabbaths in Jackson, and four in Knox, an adjoining town. In the latter place there is a small Congregational church, but no minister and no regular preaching. "The church and society in Jackson, he says, is in a broken state ; divisions having been lately made by Baptists and Methodists." He made many visits to the sick and afflicted, and exhorted from house to house. He also visited the schools, which he found generally, to be in good order. He says, "he is called upon to visit the sick, to attend funerals, and to preach to the aged ; for which he receives no compensation, as the people are very poor.

The mission, to which Rev. Mr. Page, of Limington, was appointed the last year, which was for two months, one to his own people, and one in Cape Elizabeth, was duly executed. "His mission to Cape Elizabeth," he says, "was pleasant to himself, and he trusts not without profit to the people of that place. But he found religion in a languishing and low state ; the only efficient male member of the church had then lately deceased." There are, however, it appears, several well-disposed and active men of the parish or society, who are providing means for the support of the gospel ministry, with the aid promised from some missionary societies. Since Mr. Page was at Cape Elizabeth, as our missionary, they have settled a clergyman in that place. The

people were furnished with bibles, and two sabbath schools have been lately formed. Means are also using for the suppression of intemperance in the town. While at Cape Elizabeth, Mr. Page usually preached three times on a sabbath, had lectures on the week days, as often as was deemed expedient, and made upwards of sixty family visits.

“The state of religion in Limington, where he is settled,” he says, “was unusually low the most of the year—but he has cause of gratitude, that peace and unanimity generally prevailed. Three persons were added to his church in Limington, the last year ; and endeavours were making to furnish a bible to every family. The bible class and sabbath school were continued, as formerly, and the people generally give their attendance on public worship and instruction, on the sabbath.” Mr. Page receives \$265, from his own people, and \$100 from other sources, besides what he receives from this society.

Rev. Mr. Steele, of Machias, who was appointed on a mission to Cooper, for one month, visited that place in February, and spent five sabbaths there ; but on one sabbath there was no meeting, on account of a deep snow. Mr. Steele is a man of a feeble constitution ; but he was able to preach twice a day the other four sabbaths. He says, “he visited from house to house, and conversed with the people, chiefly on the subject of religion.”

Rev. Mr. Weston, of Lebanon, had a mission for six weeks, for that place and vicinity ; and a part of that time, he spent in Milton, New Hampshire. He preached three sermons on the sabbath, and several in the course of the week ; made several family visits and found the people disposed to attend to religious instruction. Among the people of his charge, in Lebanon, he says, there has been uncommon seriousness and attention to religion, within the last two years, thirty three members have been added to his church, whose reformed and holy life bear testimony to the sincerity of their piety. At the close of his report, Mr. Weston says, “I have now to state, that the pecuniary condition of my people is such

that they will be under no necessity in asking farther aid from abroad for the support of the gospel." He also expresses his own and his people's thanks to this society, for its past assistance.

The Rev. Nathan Douglass, formerly of Alfred, had an appointment of two months in West Shapleigh, county of York ; and accordingly performed missionary service in that town, in the months of August and September. "While on this mission," he says, "I endeavored to pay the utmost regard to your wise and wholesome instruction." He says, "he preached thirty sermons, and read seven on the subject of intemperance. Several of the sermons he preached were on funeral occasions. He made one hundred and thirty family visits, and met a bible class once a week, for five weeks ; the class meetings were attended by twelve on an average. He baptised an adult person and his child, and once administered the ordinance of the Lord's supper. "This society," he says, "is struggling hard for a standing among others, who now enjoy superior advantages. The people have erected a house for worship, and were much encouraged by the kind notice of them at this time." He says, he had reason to believe, that his mission was very acceptable. During his mission, there was a great mortality among the children in West Shapleigh, fifty of whom died, and only one of them had been baptised. This, he says, he mentions, not to intimate a belief in the *future* misery of children ; but rather the *present* misery of their parents, who are thus destitute and negligent. Mr. Douglass thinks the instructions given to bible classes, promises much good to the rising generation. He thought the time had come to read the sermons on intemperance, and that good would result from them. A minister has been settled in West Shapleigh since the visit of our missionary to that place in 1828. Mr. Douglass has an appointment the present year, for two months, at St. Albans and vicinity, in the county of Somerset, where there is no settled minister of the Congregational order within twenty miles ; and which he represents as a "wilder-ness of wants."

Rev. Mr. Fargo, of Solon, was employed one month in that place and vicinity, including Moscow, Bingham, and a plantation, call-



ed the Canada-road settlement. The account he gives is favorable as to the effect of his labors in this destitute region. There is no settled minister in these places, except Mr. Fargo; and though the plantations are comparatively small, they well deserve the attention of this Society. The inhabitants are chiefly of the Congregational order, and they received Mr. Fargo with cordiality and an apparent desire for spiritual improvement. The late worthy and venerable Mr. Mc'Lean, for several years a missionary from this society, with unlimited discretion to perform service where and when he could, visited this part of the country, eighteen years ago, when the settlements were new and scattered. But, by Mr. Fargo's account, his memory is much respected; and the good instructions he gave them are remembered with holy gratitude and joy. At Bingham, Mr. Fargo says, the meetings on the sabbath were well attended, and the most of the people manifest an interest in the things of religion. A sabbath school recently established, was in a prosperous state. A small sum was raised for preaching, and by advice of Mr. Fargo it was expended by employing a young man as a candidate for settlement. At Moscow, he says, the people are less able to contribute for the support of the gospel. Our charity, he observes, was well received by the inhabitants of these places; but some of them wept when they were told, that but a part of a month could be allowed them. Two infants were baptised; and two persons offered for a union with the church. The people desired Mr. Fargo to express their thanks to the Society for the kindness thus shewn them; and to entreat for them a continuance and extension of spiritual favors. The settlement on the Canada-road is represented as a still more interesting field of missionary labor. "The joy, with which they receive the missionary, the care manifested for his comfort, the eagerness to hear his instructions, and the apparent good resulting, are subjects," says Mr. Fargo, "which cheer and animate us in our labors—of the destitute condition of this people, you will have a clear idea, when I inform you, that they have not been favored with any missionary labor for the year, except what you have furnished them by me." The same was the case with Moscow, ex-

cept two sabbaths. Mr. Fargo observes, that he is of opinion, that no people in the United States, on account of their destitute state, their poverty and their reception of religious instruction, more deserve the charity of our society. The books sent by the Society were received by the poor like food by the hungry. But so great is the want, that they were like a drop of rain on a dry and parched plain. The thanks of the people in this region are tendered to the Society, through Mr. Fargo, for the books and the labors of the missionary ; and they also earnestly request to receive similar favors, and that more time be allowed the teacher who may be sent there, if consistent with our attention and duty to the people of other places. Mr. Fargo was appointed in June last, for two months, to these places. For the last year, Mr. Fargo received \$60 from the Massachusetts Missionary Society ; and \$100 from the Maine Missionary Society. He says, these sums, with what the people of Solon allow him, compensate him about three fourths of the year.

Agreeably to his appointment, Mr. Sawyer spent two months in missionary services among the inhabitants in the plantations on the Penobscot river. "At Brownsville and Williamsburg," he observes, "I have witnessed the fruits of former labors, under the patronage of this Society. Several of my former pupils, in these places, are now active members of the church." At Sangerville, he assisted in forming a church of ten members. On former occasions, when in the service of this Society, Mr. Sanger assisted in organizing a church at Garland, and one at Foxcroft ; new towns in the county of Penobscot. During the last season, Mr. Sawyer labored nine weeks and a half, and preached ten sabbaths, in towns and plantations in different parts of the county ; baptized one adult, attended two communions, three funerals, two church meetings, a Bible Society, and several conferences. He preached twenty seven times, and made one hundred and thirty family visits. He also visited several schools, which he found well conducted. Mr. Sawyer spent more time in Brewer than he would have done, (as it is an old town,) had there not been uncommon atten-

tion to religion in that place. Many made public profession of their faith in Christ, and gave satisfactory evidence of their religious character. There was a great desire manifested by the people generally in that town to hear the gospel preached ; and Mr. Sawyer was induced therefore, to spend much time among them. For though numerous, they have no settled minister. Mr. Sawyer seems faithfully to have performed his duty as a missionary, and his labors to have been abundantly blessed. He has been appointed two months this year, for the same places which he visited the last.

By a statement of services rendered by Mr. Frederick Baylies, it appears, that he kept the Indian school at Nantucket, Chabaidick, Christian Town, Gay Head, and at Charlestown in Rhode Island, seventeen weeks in person, and employed others, as teachers in his absence, sixty three weeks. The whole number of children, who attended these schools, was 219, 195 of whom were Indians : 188 of them were taught writing ; 91 read in the Testament, 66 in the Spelling book and 33 in the Alphabet. Most of them were also required to study and answer questions from Colburn's Arithmetic. Mr. Baylies considers the schools a very important part of his labors. He says the children of the natives are intelligent and docile, and their parents gladly embrace the opportunities granted by these schools. His opinion is, that the moral and social condition of the Indians is gradually improving. The religious meetings on the sabbath, he says, have generally, been well attended ; sometimes very respectable for numbers, but, at other times, only a few attended. He expresses a belief, "that some persons among them are truly pious, and have chosen the good part which cannot be taken from them." Some sabbath schools have been lately established among tribes under the care of Mr. Baylies. And he has been supplied with books for the children who attend them.

It will be recollected, that of the tribe of Indians, called the New Stockbridge tribe, and formerly under the care of the late Rev. Mr. Sargent, in the State of New York, far the greater part

removed to Green Bay, within the territory of Michigan, about five years ago : and that since the death of Mr. Sargent, no stated missionary has been located among them. A missionary by the name of Miner, was appointed to visit those who settled at Green Bay : but he has deceased. The Rev. President Davis, and Rev. Dr. Norton, of Oneida county, State of New York, were requested by a committee of the Society to take the superintendence of those of the tribe remaining at their old settlement in that state. In a letter received from these gentlemen, bearing date, October 30th, 1829, they say, " there are but two families of the tribe still dwelling in this vicinity, who are landholders : but there are some vagrants, about whom no calculation can be made. And it appears to us, that there is nothing further which your Society ought to attempt to do for those remaining." Of those at Green Bay, they say, they are able to give no satisfactory information, as to their number or condition—and they refer to the ' American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,' which has a mission at that place, for information, respecting their state and numbers. On inquiry of the Secretary of that Board, it appears, that since the settlement began, many have migrated to the place from New Stockbridge ; thirty having removed there during the present year : and that the whole number is now 220 or 230. They are on the banks of Fox river, which falls into Green Bay. Their settlements extend about four miles on that river, and back from its banks two miles. Most of the families have farms, on which they raise corn, potatoes, wheat, &c. sufficient for their own use. Their buildings are decent and comfortable. They do not attend much to hunting, and seem disposed to cultivate the earth for a living. They exhibit many evidences of fondness for civilized life, and they understand and read the English language. They have had a school about two years, and kept chiefly by one of their own tribe. They have had some religious instruction ; but not without frequent interruptions. There is a church, consisting of 38 members, most of whom exhibit evidences of sincere piety—but a few have been disciplined and suspended for intemperance. On the sabbath, about 100 usually assemble for public religious worship,



and all have a bible. They also have books of hymns, and sing with much taste and propriety. Family religion is maintained by those who are members of the church, and are parents, and by some others. A sabbath school is maintained among them—also connected with the school is a library; and one also of 50 volumes for adults. The whole tribe of the New Stockbridge Indians, at both places have a school fund, the annual income of which is \$300—The school at Green Bay consists of about 35 or 40.

ALDEN BRADFORD, *Secretary.*

## OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY FOR 1829.

Hon. JONATHAN PHILLIPS, *President.*

Rev. Dr. PORTER, *Vice President.*

ALDEN BRADFORD, Esq. *Secretary.*

Hon. ASAHEL STEARNS, *Treasurer.*

## SELECT COMMITTEE.

Hon. JONATHAN DAVIS, Rev. Dr. WARE, Rev. Dr. HARRIS, Hon. RICHARD SULLIVAN, Rev. FRANCIS PARKMAN.

The President, Secretary, and Treasurer, are members, *ex officio*, of the Select Committee.

## MISSIONARIES FOR 1829.

			<i>months.</i>
Rev. Elijah Kellogg,	at	Perry,	2
Peter Nourse,		Mariaville,	2
Jonathan Sawyer,		Plantations on the Penobscot,	2
Nathan Douglass,		St. Albans and vicinity,	2
Freeman Parker,		Pittston, and eastern parts of Lincoln county,	2
Charles F. Page,		Limington,	2
Timothy F Rogers,		Bernardston and Vernon,	2
Marshfield Steele,		Cooper,	1
Silas Warren,		East Andover,	1
Mr. Fargo,		Moscow, Bingham, &c.	2
Mr. Frederick Baylies, Missionary and Teacher for the year, to the Indians on Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, and the Narraganset tribe in Rhode Island.			

## ACT OF INCORPORATION.

*Commonwealth of Massachusetts.*

In the year of our Lord, one thousand, seven hundred and eighty seven.

AN ACT to incorporate certain persons, by the name of "The Society for propagating the Gospel among the Indians and others in North America."

WHEREAS divers persons have petitioned this Court for an act of incorporation whereby they may be the better enabled to carry into effect their design of propagating the Gospel among the Indians and others in North America, and it is reasonable that the prayer of said petition should be granted :

Therefore to promote and encourage the same,

I. *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same*, That Richard Cranch of Braintree, Esq., Rev. John Clark of Boston, Francis Dana of Cambridge, Esq., Rev. Joseph Eckley and John Eliot of Boston, Rev. Nathaniel Emmons of Franklin, Rev. Levi Frisbie of Ipswich, Moses Gill of Princeton, and William Hyslop of Brookline, Esqrs., Rev. Timothy Hilliard of Cambridge, Jonathan Mason of Boston, Esq., Rev. Phillips Payson of Chelsea, Rev. Eliphalet Porter, and Increase Sumner, Esq., of Roxbury, Ebenezer Storer, Esq., Rev Peter Thatcher, and Oliver Wendell, Esq., of Boston, Rev. Joseph Willard, Edward Wigglesworth and Samuel Williams, Doctor of Laws, at Cambridge, and the Rev. Ebenezer Wright of Boston, be, with such others as they shall elect, and they hereby are incorporated and made a body politic, for the purpose aforesaid, by the name of "The Society for propagating the Gospel among the Indians, and others, in North America ;" and the Society aforesaid shall have perpetual succession, and may have a common seal, which it shall be lawful for them to change, break, alter, and make new at pleasure, and may purchase and hold in succession, lands, tenements, and real estate of any kind, the annual income and profit not to exceed the value of two thousand pounds. And the said Society is hereby enabled to take and receive subscriptions of charitably disposed persons, and may take any personal estate in succession ; and all donations to the Society, either by subscriptions, legacy, or otherwise, excepting such as may be differently appropriated by the donors, shall make a part of, or be put into the capital stock of the Society, which shall be put out on interest, on good security, or otherwise improved to the best advantage, and the incomes or profits applied to the purposes of propagating the Gospel among the said Indians, in such manner as they shall judge most conducive to the design of their institution ; and also among other people, who, through poverty or other circumstances, are destitute of the means of religious instructions : and the said Society is hereby empowered to give such instructions, orders and encouragements to their officers, and those they shall employ, as they shall judge

necessary ; and the persons employed as teachers in any capacity, shall be men of the protestant religion, of reputed piety, loyalty, prudence, knowledge and literature, and of other Christian and necessary qualifications suited to their respective stations.

II. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid*, That the said Society shall meet at some convenient place in the town of Boston, on the first Thursday of December, and then choose a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary, and such other officers as they shall judge proper, and may make bye laws and orders for the regulation of the said Society ; provided such bye laws and orders be not repugnant to the laws of the land, and act upon all matters which they apprehend needful, to promote the end of their institution : and the officers so chosen shall continue in their office, until the Thursday next succeeding the last Wednesday of May next following the time of their appointment.

III. *And be it further enacted*, That there shall be a general meeting of the members of the said Society at Boston aforesaid, or in any other place within this Commonwealth (unless some extraordinary occurrence prevent the same) on the Thursday aforesaid in May, and first Thursday of November, yearly, forever, and oftener, if needful, when and where the said Society shall think fit ; and any seven of the members (the President, Vice President, Treasurer or Secretary always to be one) being convened at the said times and places, are hereby declared to be a quorum of the said general meeting ; and the said Society at their general meeting in May, in every year, (and in case of any extraordinary occurrence preventing their meeting, then at their next general meeting after) shall out of their own body, by a majority of the members present, elect a President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary, and such other officers as they shall find needful, to continue in office until the May meeting next following their appointment, or until others be chosen to succeed them ; and all the officers aforesaid, before they shall be qualified to act, shall be under oath for the faithful performance of their respective trusts ; and the said Society, at their first, or any other stated meeting, (and at no other) may elect into their body such persons, as they shall judge qualified to assist them in their good design ; provided the whole number of the said society shall at no time exceed fifty members ; and may appoint committees, to prosecute the orders of any general meeting, audit the Treasurer's accounts, and prepare matters for the Society to act upon ; and such committees shall exhibit an account of their proceedings, at the general meetings of the Society.

IV. *And be it further enacted*, That the Society aforesaid, by the name aforesaid, shall be, and is hereby declared to be capable to prosecute, pursue, and defend, in all courts and places, and before all proper judges whatsoever, all actions, causes, processes and pleas, of what kind or nature soever, in the fullest and amplest manner ; and if it shall happen that the said Society shall become seized of lands or tenements by mortgages, as security for the payment of any debts, due to the said society, it shall be lawful for the said Society, by

deed under the hand and seal of their President for the time being, to sell and convey the lands acquired in either of the two mentioned ways ; provided that no such sale shall be made or concluded on, but at some general stated meeting.

V. *And be it further enacted*, That the said Society be, and hereby is empowered, upon the death of their President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, or any other officer, to choose others at any stated general meeting, to succeed them ; and may also remove any of their officers when they shall judge expedient, and appoint others to succeed them therein. Provided always, that no member shall be removed, or officers displaced, unless at one of the stated general meetings as aforesaid.

And to the end, that the members of the said Society, and all contributors to the said design, may know the state of the Society's stock, and the dispositions of the profits thereof, and of all the donations made to the said Society.

VI. *Be it further enacted*; That a particular account of such stock and disposition shall be exhibited by the Treasurer, at every stated general meeting ; which accounts the Secretary, or a committee of the said Society (having examined the same) shall certify to be true ; and fair entries shall be made in proper books, to be provided for that purpose, of all donations made to the Society, and of all the estate, both real and personal, belonging to the Society and of the increase thereof, and also of all transactions, either by themselves, their officers, or committees, for, or on any account of the said Society ; and the said books shall be brought to the stated general meetings of the Society, and be there open for the perusal and examination of the members.

VII. *And be it further enacted*, That Moses Gill, Esq. be, and he is hereby authorized, by public notification, in Adams' and Nourse's Independent Chronicle, to call the first meeting of the said Society, at such time and place, in the town of Boston, as he shall judge proper.



## MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

*for propagating the Gospel among the Indians and others.*

Named in the Incorporation Act, 1787.

* Richard Cranch, Esq.	Braintree.
* Rev. John Clark, D. D.	Boston.
* Francis Dana, Esq.	Cambridge.
* Rev. Joseph Eckley, D. D.	Boston.
* Rev. John Eliot,	Boston.
Rev. Nathaniel Emmons, D. D.	Franklin.
* Rev. Levi Frisbie,	Ipswich.
* Moses Gill, Esq.	Princeton.
* William Hyslop, Esq.	Brookline.
* Rev. Timothy Hilliard,	Cambridge



\* Jonathan Mason, Esq.  
 \* Rev. Phillips Payson, D. D.  
 Rev. Eliphalet Porter, D. D.  
 \* Increase Sumner, Esq.  
 \* Ebenezer Storer, Esq.  
 \* Rev. Peter Thatcher, D. D.  
 \* Oliver Wendell, Esq.  
 \* Rev. Joseph Willard, D. D. L. L. D.  
 \* Rev. Edward Wigglesworth, D. D.  
 \* Samuel Williams, L. L. D.  
 \* Rev. Ebenezer Wight.

Boston.  
 Chelsea.  
 Roxbury.  
 Roxbury.  
 Boston.  
 Boston.  
 Boston.  
 Cambridge.  
 Cambridge.  
 Cambridge.  
 Boston.

Elected May 29, 1788.

\* Hon. James Bowdoin, Esq.  
 \* Hon. William Phillips, Esq.,  
 \* Richard Cary, Esq.  
 \* Rev. Jeremy Belknap,  
 \* Hon. Thomas Dawes, Esq.  
 \* Thomas Russell, Esq.  
 \* Thomas Lee, Esq.  
 \* Hon. Samuel Dexter, Esq.  
 \* Hon. Cotton Tufts, Esq.

Boston.  
 Boston.  
 Charlestown,  
 Boston.  
 Boston.  
 Boston.  
 Boston.  
 Cambridge.

Elected June 15, 1792.

\* Hon. James Sullivan,  
 \* Rev. Samuel West, D. D.  
 \* Rev. Jedidiah Morse, D. D.  
 \* Rev. John Lathrop, D. D.  
 \* Rev. Simeon Howard, D. D.  
 \* William Phillips, Esq.  
 \* Hon. John Lowell,

Boston.  
 Boston.  
 Charlestown.  
 Boston.  
 Boston.  
 Boston.  
 Roxbury.

Elected November 2, 1792.

\* Nathaniel Appleton, Esq.  
 Mr. William Woodbridge,

Boston.  
 Medford. (now out of  
 the State.)

\* Rev. Daniel Little,  
 \* David S. Greenough, Esq.

Wells.  
 Roxbury.

Elected November 6, 1794.

\* Hon. Benjamin Lincoln,  
 Rev. Alden Bradford,  
 Rev. Abiel Holmes, D. D.

Hingham.  
 Wiscasset.  
 Cambridge.

Elected June 1, 1798.

\* Mr. James White,  
 \* Mr. Samuel Salisbury,

Boston.  
 Boston.

Elected May 27, 1802.

\* Mr. David Hyslop,  
 \* Dudley Atkins Tyng, Esq.  
 \* Rev. Elijah Parish, D. D.

Brookline.

Elected January 13, 1803.

\* Rev. David Tappan, D. D.  
 \* Eliphalet Pearson, L. L. D.

Cambridge.  
 Cambridge.

Elected November 1, 1804.

\* Rev. Thomas Barnard, D. D.  
 Rev. William E. Channing,  
 \* Samuel Eliot Esq.  
 \* Daniel Denison Rogers, Esq.

Salem.  
 Boston.  
 Boston.  
 Boston.

\* Samuel Parkman, Esq. Boston.  
 Hon. John. Davis, L. L. D. Boston.  
 \* Rev Joseph McKean, D. D. Brunswick.

Elected November 7, 1805.

\* Hon. John Treadwell, Salem.  
 Mr. Benjamin Bussey, Boston.  
 Mr. Samuel H. Walley, Boston.  
 Rev. Joshua Bates, Dedham. (now of Vermont.)

Elected November 5, 1807.

\* Edward A. Holyoke, M. D. Salem.  
 \* Hon. Thomas Dawes, Jun. Boston.  
 Rev. James Kendall, D. D. Plymouth.  
 Hon. Jonathan Phillips, Boston.

Elected November 3, 1808.

\* Mr. Josiah Salisbury, Boston.

Elected November 7, 1811.

Rev. John T. Kirkland, D. D. L. L. D. Cambridge.  
 Rev. Henry Ware, D. D. Cambridge.  
 \* Rev. Thomas Prentiss, D. D. Medfield.  
 Rev. William Greenough, Newton.  
 Rev. John Pierce, Brookline.

Elected November 2, 1814.

Mr. Edward Tuckerman, Jun. Boston.  
 \* Caleb Gannett, Esq. Cambridge.  
 Rev. Charles Lowell, Boston.  
 \* Mr. Elisha Ticknor, Boston.  
 Rev. Samuel Gile, Milton.  
 \* Rev. John Foster, D. D. Brighton.  
 Levi Hedge, Esq. Cambridge.  
 \* Rev. Joshua Huntington, Boston.  
 \* Rev. Joseph McKean, L. L. D. Cambridge.

Elected November 5, 1818.

Rev. Francis Parkman, Boston.  
 Rev. Joseph Tuckerman, Chelsea.  
 \* Hon. John Phillips, Boston.  
 Hon. Asahel Stearns, Cambridge.  
 Rev. Ebenezer Porter, D. D. Andover.  
 Mr. Pliny Cutler, Boston.

Elected May 30, 1822.

Rev. Thaddeus M. Harris, Dorchester.  
 Hon. Isaac Parker, L. L. D. Boston.  
 \* Edwards Phillip, Esq. Boston.  
 Rev. John Codman, Dorchester.  
 Hon. Daniel Webster, Boston.  
 Hon. William Reed, Marblehead.

Elected November 3, 1825.

Hon. Richard Sullivan, Brookline.  
 \* James P. Chaplin, M. D. Cambridge.  
 Rev. Henry Ware, Jun. Boston.  
 Hon. Samuel Hubbard, Boston.  
 Rev. Benjamin B. Wisner, D. D. Boston.  
 John C. Warren, M. D. Boston.

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**DR. WISNER'S SERMON**

ON

**SABBATH SCHOOLS.**

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Benefits and Claims of Sabbath Schools.

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SERMON  
15438

DELIVERED IN

THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH, IN BOSTON,

ON THE MORNING AND AFTERNOON OF THE SABBATH,

JANUARY 17, 1830.

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BY BENJAMIN B. WISNER,

PASTOR OF THE OLD SOUTH CHURCH IN BOSTON.

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—◆—  
Boston :

PERKINS & MARVIN, 114, WASHINGTON ST.

.....  
1830.

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REV. B. B. WISNER,

*Dear Sir,*—At a recent meeting of the Board of Managers of the Boston Sabbath School Union, I was appointed a Committee, to request a copy of the Sermon recently delivered by you on the subject of Sabbath Schools, for publication.

In performing the duty assigned me by the unanimous vote of the Board, I will only add my conviction, that a general perusal of your Discourse would tend to encourage those who are engaged in this work, to prosecute it with increased energy, and induce many who are disconnected with these institutions, to give them their confidence, their co-operation, and their support.

With great respect, I am Sir,

Your obedient servant,

EBENEZER G. PARKER.

*Boston, February 3, 1830.*

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MR. E. G. PARKER,

*Dear Sir,*—The Sermon, of which the Managers of the Boston Sabbath School Union have, through you, requested a copy for the press, was written without a thought of its being published. It contains little or nothing new, and the facts on which its reasonings are based have nearly all, in different forms, been heretofore given to the public. Your Board are, however, pleased to think that the collection and presentation of them made in this Sermon may, by its publication, contribute something to the advancement of the great and good work in which you are engaged; and others, whom I have consulted, and whose judgment I respect, have expressed the same opinion. I have therefore concluded to submit the Discourse, with some additions in the form of notes, to your disposal.

Very respectfully yours,

B. B. WISNER.

*Boston, February 15, 1830.*

## SERMON.

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Deuteronomy, xi. 19, 20, 21.

*And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates: That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth.*

THIS command, you are aware, was delivered to the Israelites by Moses, a man of great wisdom and benevolence, and under the unerring guidance of the Holy Spirit. The duty enjoined is that of diligent and persevering instruction. The persons to be thus instructed are children; not very small children merely, but all the young who are yet under the care of parents, masters, and guardians; those whose characters are forming for time and eternity, and who, therefore, constitute the most interesting portion of the community. The things they are to be taught are the "words" of God mentioned in the preceding verse; the great truths of divine revelation. "Teach them," saith Jehovah, "my words:" concerning which it is elsewhere said, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple." And observe the diligence and constancy with which this instruction is to be given. "Ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them, when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Yea, more. "And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house,

and upon thy gates." Every possible means must be employed to make the young acquainted with the truths and precepts of God's word; and to preserve them in their minds in all their vividness and power. And all this was incumbent, not only on individual parents in relation to their own offspring; the command was addressed to the whole body of the people, in both their civil and their ecclesiastical capacity. All were to take this interest in, and see that this instruction was faithfully given to, *the whole mass of each rising generation*. And now mark the happy result that would follow the performance of this duty. "That your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord swear unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth." As long as you faithfully obey this command, your families and your nation shall be blessed with temporal and spiritual prosperity. "Your days, in the land which I swear unto your fathers to give them, shall be as the days of heaven upon the earth;"—crowned with the signal blessings I have promised in my covenant with your fathers, as richly and constantly as the light of day diffuses its benefits over the earth. This is God's method of making happy families, and prosperous and happy nations; having all their children faithfully and constantly taught his "words"—the truths and duties of his holy religion.

The subject, then, presented by our text is, **THE DUTY AND ADVANTAGES OF IMPARTING A KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S HOLY WORD TO THE YOUNG.**

Among the various plans which have been devised for effecting this most desirable object, none appears so prominent and successful as that of **SABBATH SCHOOLS**; to which you will permit me now to invite your particular attention.

I address you on this subject, because I believe I can, with the blessing of God, in no way promote more effectually the interests of religion in this congregation, and in our beloved country, and through the world, as connected with your instrumentality; and because I am under a promise, some time since made, to discourse on this topic to my people. In the month of May last, I, in connexion with other clergymen, was requested, by the



Association which has the charge of the three Sabbath schools that attend worship with this congregation and of several others in the city, to preach on this subject as soon as should be convenient. To this request I readily returned an affirmative answer. The Association then made application to the parish for permission to take a contribution, to aid them in their benevolent and expensive object, whenever I should present it to the congregation. This request was, at a regular parish meeting, kindly and unanimously granted. For some time after these occurrences, the state of my health did not permit my undertaking the labor of preparation for the pleasing service to which I had thus been called. And since the removal of this impediment by a gracious Providence, there has been no time, until the present, when it has been, both convenient to me, and deemed expedient, to redeem the mutual pledge of myself and the parish to that laborious and most useful Association. To-day the obligation is to be discharged, I trust as readily and cheerfully by this congregation, as, I assure them, it is by their Pastor.

In performing this duty, I shall apply the passage I have repeated as a text to these interesting institutions; and discuss, in application to them, the topics it suggests in an inverted order, considering *first*, THE BENEFITS OF SABBATH SCHOOLS, and *secondly*, OUR DUTIES IN RELATION TO THEM.

I. *First*, In the spirit of the latter part of my text, I shall point out some of the important BENEFITS OF SABBATH SCHOOLS.

And in executing this design, I shall have very little to do with theoretical reasonings; but shall direct your attention chiefly to well attested facts, presenting you with principles and results furnished by actual experience. And that the facts and considerations I shall present may be properly estimated, I would here remind you, that, from the nature of the case, as well as from the declarations of scripture, it is to be expected that the benefits of the Sabbath school system will be gradually developed, and a large portion of them, especially those of a more positive kind, for a considerable time unperceived. Just as, in the case of parents, while they ought to desire

earnestly and labor diligently for the early conversion of their children, yet, for the most part, we expect to see the blessed fruits of their faithful efforts developed in their children's maturer years; so, while Sabbath school teachers should seek, far more generally and earnestly than I fear they do, the accomplishment of the ultimate object of their benevolent labors in the salvation of the children brought under their influence, yet we do not expect to see the full developement of the legitimate effects of their self-denying exertions till the formation of character in their pupils is completed, and the generation on the stage have been reared under their beneficent influence. And said our Lord, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how." And "another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; which, indeed, is the least of all seeds, but, when it is grown, is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." And yet "another parable spake he unto them, The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Now the great purpose of every Sabbath school is, or ought to be, to promote this kingdom of heaven: the great business of its teachers is, or ought to be, to sow the seed of this kingdom. But nowhere in the whole world is there yet an entire generation on the stage that enjoyed in early life the influence of Sabbath school instruction. And in this country, it is stated that the first Sabbath school, in the present form, was opened, at Pittsburg in Pennsylvania, only twenty years ago:\* others were established, by private and individual effort, in different cities, in 1811, '13, '14, and '15; but no regular organization for the establishment and support of these institutions was formed till January 1816, when a number of benevolent ladies in the city of New-York formed the first Sabbath School Union in America.† Their noble example was

\* On the 22d, of August, 1809. See *Christian Spectator*, Vol. 1 pp. 347.

† *Christian Spectator*, Vol. 1, pp. 347, 348.

speedily followed in various parts of the country, till these benevolent institutions are found existing and flourishing throughout the land. So that it is *but fourteen years* since Sabbath schools began to be generally established in the United States. And, notwithstanding their rapid multiplication since that memorable era, the number of children in our country, computed, in May 1828, from the best data that could be procured, to be receiving Sabbath school instruction, was but about *one seventh* of that portion of our population which is between the ages of five and fifteen years.\* Let these facts be kept in mind in estimating the bearing of the results that will be presented for your consideration in this discourse.†

In setting before you the benefits of Sabbath schools, I remark,

1. *First*, That they have A POWERFUL INFLUENCE IN PROMOTING INTELLECTUAL IMPROVEMENT.

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\* Report for 1828 of the American Sunday School Union, p. 9.

† The author would be extremely sorry to find, that any individual who may read this sermon, had inferred from the preceding remarks, that Sabbath school teachers are not bound to seek the early conversion of their pupils. He has said that they "should seek far more generally and earnestly than it is feared they do, the accomplishment of the ultimate object of their benevolent labors in the salvation of the children brought under their influence." He would add, as expressing views in which he entirely accords, the following extract from a communication in the Sabbath School Treasury, Vol. 2, pp. 74, 75. "It is far too late in the progress of Sabbath schools, for any one to pretend, that the only good to be *expected* from these efforts with the young, is merely to withdraw them, during a few hours of holy time, from all injurious influence to which they might otherwise be exposed; or, at most, to sow the seeds of virtue and piety, which *may* spring and grow in *future* life. Examples of the most interesting character are almost daily presenting themselves, which prove, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that the child of *four*, and even younger, may be, and often is, made the subject of renewing grace. And not unfrequently does it occur, that children of this age have manifested a love to God, and a zeal for his glory, and an anxiety for the salvation of souls, which have made their Christian parents blush at their own comparative indifference. Are these things so? Then should they not be, to every teacher, most powerful incentives, as well as encouragements, to make new and more energetic efforts for the *present*, the *immediate* good of every member of his class? Would not every teacher do well frequently to indulge in reflections like these: 'There is not a child in my class too young to love God, or too young to die and go to judgment. Oh! then, shall I not, henceforth, labor, and pray, and act, in view of these solemn truths, and my own tremendous responsibilities? And shall I ever remit my efforts, till I have good evidence that the salvation of their souls is made sure.'" Let every Sabbath school teacher remember, that the Saviour has said, "Suffer *little* children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of *such* is the kingdom of heaven." And let it be his aim to lead the *least* of those, and *all* those who have been committed to his influence, *immediately* to this compassionate and waiting Redeemer.

The great and primary object of these institutions is, indeed, to promote religious knowledge, and contribute to its appropriate influence on the heart and life. But none who hear me need be told, that the acquisition of this knowledge necessarily includes the obtaining of much information which is not itself strictly religious; and exerts a powerful influence in expanding and strengthening the mind, which is the principle object in all intellectual education.

Consider how much study and investigation, not only of the doctrines and duties inculcated in the Bible, but of history, natural, civil and ecclesiastical, of geography, and manners and customs, and how much mental effort in preparing for and performing their pleasing duties, are required in the *teachers* of our Sabbath schools; and remember that there are, of the various religious denominations, seventy or eighty thousand\* men and women in our country thus employed every week in the greater part of each year; and see how the result tells on the intellectual improvement of our population.†

But this is a small item in the account. To ascertain the sum of this important influence, we must add that exerted, directly and indirectly, upon the *children* of our country. To multitudes, Sabbath schools are the only means of their being taught to read, and thus of having opened to them the inestimable benefits of a common education. This is the case, to a greater or less extent, in a majority of the States of our Union. And where the means of common school instruction are most abundant, these institutions have a powerful influence on the intel-

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\* This estimate will be considered moderate when it is known that the number of teachers reported in May last, as in connexion with the American Sunday School Union, was 52,663.—*Fifth Report*, p. 9.

† "We cannot leave this topic," says the Report for 1829 of the American Sunday School Union, speaking of the duties and influence of teachers, "without submitting a single suggestion to reflecting and observing men in the United States. We ask them to estimate (as far as it can be done by a pecuniary standard) the amount which Sunday school teachers contribute to educate our population. There are 52,663 teachers in connexion with our Society, and now engaged in this work; and some of them we know to be men and women, whose services in such an undertaking your money would not purchase. But, at *thirty three cents* a Sabbath, which was the established rates when Sunday school teachers, as at first, were paid, their compensation would amount to NINE HUNDRED AND THREE THOUSAND, SIX HUNDRED AND NINETY SEVEN DOLLARS, annually."



lectual improvement of the rising generation. They increase the interest in general education ; and lead to the establishment of new schools, or improvements in those already existing, for the promotion of that important object. To this influence the people of this city are indebted for their excellent system of Primary schools.\* When Sabbath schools were instituted here, it was found that very many parents had neglected to have their children taught to read ; and by this deficiency they were excluded from the Grammar schools, and thus wholly unprofited by the provisions then made at the public expense for the education of our population. The gentlemen whose benevolent labors in the establishment of Sabbath schools had discovered to them this capital defect in our system of general education, immediately brought before the town a proposal for the establishment of Primary schools. The proposal was adopted ;--and thus the advantages of a substantial education are in reality furnished to all our citizens who are disposed to improve them for their children. A similar influence was exerted by Sabbath schools in New York ; and, to some extent, in other cities in the Union. And in country towns, most salutary has been the influence of the Sabbath, on the common, schools. Frequent, I am informed on good authority,† have been the instances of teachers in the latter, (finding that those of their pupils who also attended Sabbath schools were more diligent in their studies and interested in making improvement than others,)

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\* These schools which were instituted in 1813, are taught by females, and receive all the children of the city between four and seven years of age, whose parents choose to send them. Their number at present is 57. Next in the system of public schools of Boston, are the Grammar schools, of which there are at present 9. These schools receive children of both sexes over seven years of age, who have passed through the Primary schools or received elsewhere equivalent instruction. The branches taught in them are those embraced in a good common English education. Next are the Latin school, and the English High school, in which boys are fitted for college, or taught the higher branches of an English education. A citizen of Boston may send his child to any or all the different classes of these schools at no other expense than that incurred by purchasing the necessary books. There are also two schools in the House of Industry, and in the House of Reformation for Juvenile Delinquents. Making in all eighty public schools ; in which there were, in November last, 7,430 pupils ; and the total expense of which for the year 1829, was \$65,500.

† A verbal statement made to me by the Secretary of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Union.

visiting these institutions, for the avowed purpose of learning by what means so happy an influence was exerted in them. In a certain town the institution of a Sabbath school was opposed by the members of the School Committee as unnecessary. But such was the superiority of those children that attended it soon manifested in the common schools, that these gentlemen were convinced of their error, and became some of its most devoted friends.\* In another town where it was then customary to close the Sabbath school during the winter, so that its members were, during that time, deprived of the privilege of access to their own library, it was found that, during the period of the suspension of the Sabbath school, more books had been taken, by its teachers and pupils, from a public library in the town, than by all the other inhabitants.\* These may be styled indirect influences of these institutions in promoting intellectual improvement.

Still more powerful is their direct influence of this kind on their pupils. Mental effort is continually called forth in the preparation and recitation of their lessons. The subjects to which their attention is chiefly directed are those of all others most influential in rousing and expanding the mind. In addition to which, they are constantly acquiring the general information already adverted to as connected with a knowledge of the scriptures. Their teachers, being actuated by a disinterested desire of the good of their pupils, generally take special pains to give thorough instruction, and to have the subjects and lessons attended to understood. The library of the Sabbath school is also continually communicating information to the pupils and their parents. And in these ways a habit of study, and a desire for improvement, and a taste for reading, are formed, which, as already shown, have an important influence on the employment of other means of intellectual cultivation.

‘I have long,’ says a distinguished literary gentleman in one of the middle States, ‘been deeply interested in Sabbath schools, and have for several years sent my own children. And I have found that “in a multitude of cases, these institutions prove more effectual in rousing, anima-

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\* A verbal statement made to me by the Secretary of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Union.

ting, and inspiring with a thirst for knowledge, and in preparing for all that is useful and good, than, perhaps, any or all other private means of instruction whatever."\*\* Said a Judge in one of the superior courts, in another State, to a Sabbath school teacher, "I am delighted that you have invited my children to attend; for, since they have entered your Sunday school, they have learned to love their books."† "A Sabbath school," writes another highly respectable individual, "was established in my vicinity, and furnished with a select library of books. I did nothing for its encouragement, not so much as to permit the members of my family to attend. Before this school was established, my children were not excelled by any in the neighborhood for their proficiency in study. In one year, however, I had the mortification of discovering that the children who had been in the habit of attending the Sabbath school, had obtained much more information than mine, that they had acquired a fondness for books while mine were the devotees of amusement, and that they had imbibed moral principles, which, with all the partiality of a father, were, I must confess, better than those with which mine were actuated. I therefore resolved to break through my rule, as an experiment. I sent my children to the Sabbath school. I contributed my proportion to the library, that I might not be considered parsimonious. And the experience of only a few months has convinced me that, on the principle of economy in the education of children, Sabbath schools have advantages sufficiently great to entitle them to the highest eulogium. It is my deliberate opinion, that, in the progress of education, those children who have the additional advantage of a Sabbath school, will learn at least one quarter more in the same time, than those who neglect or are denied this privilege. On the score of economy, therefore, this institution ought to be established and encouraged in every neighborhood throughout our country."‡

2. I remark as a *second* benefit of Sabbath schools, that **THEY CONVEY MORAL AND RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION TO**

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\* Rev. Dr. Miller, Sabbath School Treasury, vol. 2, p. 87.

† American Sunday School Magazine, Vol. 2, p. 333.

‡ New York Observer, of April 4, 1820, Vol. 7, p. 53.

MULTITUDES WHO WOULD NOT OTHERWISE RECEIVE IT; AND THEY GREATLY ASSIST PARENTS WHO ARE DISPOSED TO PERFORM THEIR DUTY IN REFERENCE TO THE MORAL AND RELIGIOUS INTERESTS OF THEIR CHILDREN.

All who hear me will agree, that it is most important and desirable that children and youth should receive faithful and continual moral and religious instruction. "The minds of the young cannot, in reference to moral and religious subjects, remain a blank a single day. They will imbibe opinions, receive impressions, and acquire habits, of one kind or another. And, from the inherent corruption of human nature, and the prevalence both of speculative and practical error in the world, those opinions and impressions and habits cannot fail to be bad, unless care be taken to preoccupy the mind with those of an opposite character."\* Morality and piety are a fruit of correct moral and religious knowledge. And this knowledge, like every other, is conveyed by instruction. And, like every other kind of knowledge, it is most important that it should be communicated in childhood and youth. If not acquired then, it will, in most cases, never be attained.

But how many parents are there wholly incapable of giving their children this most important of all instruction? And of those who have the capacity, how many are there who have not the disposition, and wholly neglect it? What multitudes of children in every part of our country, who, but for Sabbath schools, would have grown up in ignorance of the very first principles of correct morality and true religion, are, in these institutions, taught them in all their purity, and thus receive some of their earliest and strongest moral and religious impressions?

But these are not the only families that are benefitted in this particular, by Sabbath schools. Those parents who feel their obligations to teach their children the truths of morality and religion, will be greatly assisted by these institutions, in this most important duty. The Sabbath was given us, in connexion with the many other benevolent purposes of its institution, that a portion of it

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\* Edinburgh Christian Instructor, Vol. for 1813, p. 313.



might be employed in the religious instruction of children ; and it is of the utmost importance to their future usefulness and welfare, that children should form the habit of regarding this day with reverence, and separating from it all their ordinary employments and amusements, and devoting its sacred hours to the services of religion. But what pious parent needs be told, how difficult and almost impossible it is to keep children thus restrained and employed when at home during the portions of the sacred day not occupied by public worship ; and, if the effort is successful, how apt they are to come to account the Sabbath a weariness, and conceive a disgust for the private instructions and duties of religion ? But send them to the Sabbath school ; and this serious difficulty is at once removed. They are, during the whole day, withdrawn from secular amusements and employments, and engaged in acquiring moral and religious knowledge, and performing religious duties ; and this, not reluctantly and with disgust, but with cheerfulness and delight. And now, during the portion of the sacred day which they spend at home, they are, of choice, reading religious books ; and prepared, with interest and pleasure, to listen to the instructions and exhortations of parental piety. Let the parent just manifest a disposition to help forward the preparation of the lesson for the Sabbath school, or, at the close of the day, to learn what has been recited and what instruction was given ; and he will have all the opportunity he can desire to bring the whole weight of his parental influence to bear, acceptably and powerfully, on the moral and religious improvement of his children. Thus, in the language of the eloquent Chalmers in his celebrated essay on Sabbath schools, “ the seminaries we plead for, instead of having any effect to mar, do, in fact, harmonize, at all points, with the spiritual complexion of our most decent and devoted families. Nor can we conceive any degree of piety or Christian wisdom, on the part of parents, that should lead them to regard a well conducted Sabbath school, in any other light than as a blessing and an acquisition to their children.”\*

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\* Essay on Sabbath Schools, in the Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns, as quoted in the American S. S. Magazine, Vol. 1, p. 43.

3. I add, *thirdly*, A MIGHTY INFLUENCE IS EXERTED, BY THE INSTITUTIONS WHOSE BENEFITS I AM DESCRIBING, IN PREVENTING VICE AND CRIME, AND IN PROMOTING GOOD MORALS. This would be naturally inferred from the statements already made. It would be contrary to all analogy, that so much moral and religious instruction should be given to children and youth, without laying a powerful restraint on our rising population, and having an extended and powerful influence in producing orderly and correct deportment. And the actual results fully meet these reasonable anticipations. The single circumstance of so many children, especially in large towns, being collected on the Sabbath in these institutions, who would otherwise be ranging the streets, free from all restraint, has, of itself, a very material influence in producing the effect of which I am now speaking. For, as every good thing when perverted becomes the source of evil proportioned to the beneficial effects which would result from its faithful improvement; so the Sabbath, which, when rightly observed, is the most powerful of all instruments in promoting the morals of a community, becomes, when prostituted to purposes of idleness, and amusement, and dissipation, a most fruitful occasion of the increase of immorality and crime. And especially is this the case where children are suffered to run at large, and spend the sacred hours in idleness, and amusement, and sin. But let Sabbath schools be opened, and suitable efforts be made by the friends of good order for their prosperity; and how soon is the scene most delightfully changed? In the first report of the Boston Society for the Religious and Moral Instruction of the Poor, the Directors, speaking of the two Sabbath schools then under their care, and which had been established about six months, make the following statements. "Of 336 children received into the Mason street school, none of whom are under five years of age, not one fourth could read words of one syllable when admitted, and most of them did not know their letters. And in the other school, where 164 have been received, the proportions do not essentially vary from this statement. These children are as ignorant of the first principles of Christianity, as of the ordinary school education; and some of them, as old as 10 or 13 years, have never, as we

have good reason to believe, attended a house of worship in their lives. And, in general, we have observed that their morals have been entirely neglected. The paternal restraint and instruction which are so vitally important to children, at this critical age, appear to have had hardly an existence among the subjects of our observations. From children in this state, what else can be expected, but that profane and vulgar language which is so frequently and constantly heard in our streets? Or how can we be surprised at the commission of flagrant crimes, by boys of tender ages;—crimes of so deep a dye as not only to fill the humane observer's bosom with anguish, but to require, as experience testifies, the confinement of the State Prison, as an expiation."\* And now hear their statement of some of the results of their benevolent labors in this department, within less than six months after their commencement. "We have heard," they say, "of several examples of boys whose reformation has been indicated, in some instances, by leaving off profane language, and in others, by avoiding quarrelsome habits, in consequence of their Sabbath instructions. And when we inquire of the neighbors of these children, who have been disturbed by their Sabbath-breaking propensities, we have the happiness to hear the accounts of their parents confirmed, by those who have witnessed both their misconduct and reformation. One gentleman in particular, who resides in a part of the town, from which many children have been taken to the Sunday schools, informs us, that, the preceding year, he had sixty panes of glass broken on one Sabbath by boys in the neighborhood, whom he was compelled to quiet by the assistance of the police. But since these schools have been opened, he assured us he has witnessed no disturbance or depredations on the Sabbath."† And another of our citizens said, a few years after, Before the establishment of these schools, "there were generally collections of boys playing in the streets on the Sabbath, using the language of profaneness and indecency; but now, such scenes are witnessed comparatively seldom. And among the children educated in the Sunday schools, there are none known to be profane swearers, nor have I heard of one who has been con-

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\* p. 4.

† pp. 5, 6.

finer by public authority.”\* And, not long since, one of the Justices of the Police Court in this city stated, at an anniversary meeting of the Boston Sunday School Society,† that “there are more juvenile delinquents brought before that court on Monday, than on any other day of the week ; and that he was happy to say, that no Sabbath school scholar was ever found among their number.”‡ And in the last report of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Union, I find the following statement. “In the reports of 35 schools it is definitely stated, that no individual from their number has ever been arraigned before a civil tribunal for immoral conduct ; while only two, from all our schools, are mentioned, who have been arrested ; and these attended the Sabbath school, irregularly for a very short time.”§ And a few years since, “it was stated before a committee of the English House of Commons, by persons who had been much concerned in Sabbath schools, that they had never known one of their pupils become a common beggar. And Mr. Raikes, the founder of the Sabbath school system, stated, that, during 20 years, among 3000 persons who had been instructed in these institutions, he had, after strict inquiry and diligent search, heard of but one who had been committed to prison as a criminal.”|| These statements, to which it was convenient for me to turn without any laborious research, are, doubtless, fair specimens of statements that might be made, with truth, of the influence of Sabbath schools, in this particular, in every part of our country, and throughout the world. And what do they indicate would be the glorious result, in private and public morals, after a few years, if these institutions were every where established, and regularly attended by the whole body of the rising generation ?

4. I add, *fourthly*, THE GREATEST AND MOST IMPORTANT INFLUENCE OF THESE INSTITUTIONS IS FOUND IN THE PROMOTION OF TRUE PIETY.

Without this, intellectual cultivation will, ultimately, be

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\* Rev. S. E. Dwight, in a speech before the London Sunday School Union, in May, 1825, as published in the Amer. S. S. Mag. Vol. 2, p. 240.

† Which has charge of the Sunday schools in connexion with the Unitarian congregations in this city. There are also in the city Sabbath schools maintained by the Baptists, the Episcopalians, the Methodists, the Roman Catholics, the Christians, and the Universalists.

‡ Sabbath School Treasury, Vol. 2, p. 70.

§ p. 34.

|| Report of the Christ Church Sunday School, Boston.



only the occasion of more aggravated misery ; moral and religious instruction misimproved, will only add to the weight of condemnation that will come on the guilty soul ; and morality will have no solid basis, and will not screen its possessor from the never-ending displeasure of a heart-searching and holy God. But, possessed of true piety, the most unlettered is acquiring an enlarged understanding ; righteousness and true holiness of life are secured ; the great purpose of our existence will certainly be attained ; usefulness on earth and endless happiness in heaven are the unfailing fruit.

Now the great purpose of Sabbath schools is to promote, in the teachers and scholars, true piety. The teachers are more or less engaged, every week, in studying and inculcating the truths of God's word. And how much reason to hope it will be the means of renovating and sanctifying their souls ? The pupils are made interested in, and more and more acquainted with, the holy scriptures. And how strong the probability that very many of them, like Timothy, will find them able to make them wise unto salvation ? And in this way, both teachers and scholars are prepared for attending with interest and profit on the preaching of the word, and other stated and occasional means of grace. Multitudes of parents who had lived in utter neglect of these means, have, by the influence of these institutions, been brought to be regular and interested attendants on public worship. There are now in this house witnesses to the truth of this statement ; and there is, probably, not a congregation in the land, connected with a Sabbath school, in which they may not be found. " More has been done," says the last report of the Massachusetts Union, " than in any former year, in establishing schools in neighborhoods on the borders of towns, and in places that have been wasting for want of the stated means of grace, where meeting houses have been visited only occasionally, and, like objects deserted, have stood with broken windows and open doors. Efforts to establish schools in such places, where there was nothing but faith to encourage effort, have been more than successful. More has been realized than hope, even in her attitude of most eager expectancy, dared to anticipate. In some places the effect has been to establish

stated public worship, where it was only occasional, and to increase the number of worshippers twofold. And in instances not a few, individuals, living in the outskirts of towns, at such a distance as hardly to visit it from year to year, have become the constant attendants on public worship.”\* In addition to all this, the religious books of the Sabbath school library are continually circulating among the families with which the children are connected. And the teachers, in their visits, are often giving affectionate and pious admonition. And the scholars are bringing before the minds of the other members of their families, and exciting in them a regard for, the great truths of religion. “Parents,” says Dr. Chalmers, “in spite of themselves, feel an interest in that which interests and occupies their children ; and, through the medium of natural affection, have their thoughts been caught to the subject of Christianity ; and the very tasks and exercises of their children,” at the Sabbath school, “have brought a theme to their evening circle, upon which, aforesaid, not a syllable of utterance was heard ; and still more, when a small and select library is attached to the institution, has it been the means of circulating, through many a household privacy, such wisdom and such piety as were indeed new visitants upon a scene, till now untouched by any footstep of sacredness.”†

And now, what are the results of these so diversified and extremely favorable applications of the means of producing and cherishing vital religion ? Of the blessed effects already produced, much will not be known till the judgment day ; and far more striking and happy results

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\* p. 9. In the report of the same Union, for the year 1823, p. 16, is the following statement, from the General Agent ; “ In the town of H., which your agent has visited, there is a neighborhood, where many of the inhabitants, a year since, were accustomed to spend the Sabbath in hunting, fishing, drunkenness, and profaneness ; with only one professor of religion in their midst. She came to the church, three or four miles distant, and asked if something could not be done to save her neighbors ? A few teachers were sent out to commence a Sabbath school there. Most have now found the way to the house of God, and attend there regularly ; and one man, who had lived eighty years, zealously declaring to all that ‘ the wicked shall not be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God,’ has set up family devotion, and gives pleasing evidence that he has commenced a new life. The whole moral character of that neighborhood is radically changed.” Might not some reader of this discourse be the instrument, by similar means, of accomplishing a similar happy result ? ‘ TRY.’

† Essay on Sabbath Schools in the Christian and Civic Economy of large towns, as quoted in the Sund. Sch. Magazine, Vol. 1, p. 41.

are yet to be witnessed in this world, from the instrumentality already employed. But enough is now known to convince every benevolent mind that Sabbath schools are means of grace specially favored of Heaven, and are exerting a mightier influence than any thing else, except the preaching of the Gospel, in promoting the salvation of men. Very many parents have, by an influence from the Sabbath schools which their children have attended, been brought to the saving knowledge of Christ. There are several members of this Church, who could stand up living witnesses of the truth of this statement. And their testimony might be confirmed by members of almost every other church in Christendom, that has, for any considerable time, had connected with it a Sabbath school. And of the influence of these institutions in promoting vital religion among their teachers and pupils, we have such statements, from authentic sources, as the following. "During the first year after the organization of the New York Female Sunday School Union," (the earliest association of the kind in this country,) "24 of the scholars made a profession of religion; and many others, by their seriousness, gave reason for the hope that they were not far from the kingdom of God."\* And the report of the same society for 1828 states, that, during the preceding year, 66 of their teachers, and 18 of their scholars, and during the seven preceding years of the existence of their society, 418 teachers and scholars, had made a profession of religion." "In Philadelphia, when Sunday schools were first established, out of the number who were employed as teachers, there were 65 who gave no indication of decided piety. But, in two years, out of this number, 50 had made a public profession of religion."† And from 1818 to 1824, in one of the Unions in that city, 205 teachers, and 73 scholars, had united themselves with the Church.‡ And in this city, it is known to many who hear me, that of the additions made to our churches during the last eight years, a considerable and continually increasing proportion have been from among the teachers and scholars of our Sabbath schools. And similar have been their fruits in country places.

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\* Christian Spectator, Vol. 1, p. 583.

† Amer. Sund. Sch. Magazine, Vol. 2, p. 240.

‡ Ib. Vol. 3, p. 104.

" In the account of a revival in the State of New York several years since, it was stated, that, of 35 who were hopeful sharers in the work, 29 belonged to the Sabbath school. And of 100 who united with a church in another place, in the course of a single year, 98 had enjoyed the blessings of Sabbath school instruction."\* In 1825 a member of a church in New Jersey wrote, "about one hundred young persons have," since the establishment of our schools, "been united to the church, who, after considerable investigation, it was concluded, have all been, in some way or other, connected with the Sabbath schools of the congregation, either as teachers or scholars. We may add to this about 30 persons of color, who have received religious instruction in some of the Sunday schools, and have made a profession of religion."† And in 1828, a clergyman in one of the towns of Massachusetts, said he was "confident that every individual who was in his first Sabbath school, was then a member of his church. And that while some, during a recent revival, were hopefully converted from every other house in the vicinity, one large family of children, whose father, (a member of the church,) refused to let them attend the Sabbath school, (saying, he could give instruction enough at home,) was passed by without a single trophy of renewing grace."‡ The report of the Massachusetts Union for 1828, states, "In 69 schools, 348 teachers and 248 scholars have publicly professed their faith in Christ during the last year; besides very many who hope they have exercised faith in his atoning blood, but have not yet publicly espoused his cause."§ And the last year they report, "380 teachers and 237 scholars added to the church."|| And the report of the American Sunday School Union for 1828, after remarking that "very few of the reports received from auxiliaries, mention the number of teachers and scholars who have made a profession of religion in the past year," adds, "the number of the former actually reported is 1269, and of the latter 909; which, being added to those before reported,¶ makes

\* Christian Spectator, Vol. 4, p. 327. † Amer. S. S. Mag. Vol. 2, p. 152.

‡ Mass. Union, third report, p. 16.

§ Third report, p. 6.

|| Mass. Union, fourth report, p. 6.

¶ The meaning is presumed to be, before reported by that Society, since its formation in 1824.



7659. But we believe this," the managers subjoin, "is not one fourth of the teachers and pupils, who, after their connexion with Sabbath schools, have been taught by the Holy Spirit, and publicly professed their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ."\*

Such are *specimens* of the results every where realized as the fruits of Sabbath schools. And the Christians formed in these institutions, are not such as are content with a mere hope of their own salvation. They are Christians formed in the school of active, practical benevolence; Christians who indeed, generally, live not unto themselves, but for the glory of God and the best interests of men. And from these materials are forming most of the agents engaged in promoting the kingdom of Christ. The last report of our own State Union mentions as fruits of Sabbath schools in this Commonwealth, 88 ministers or young men preparing for the ministry.† And "a large proportion," it is stated on the best authority, "of the present congregations and churches in England, and of the devoted laborers in the various religious and philanthropic institutions, are the fruits of Sabbath schools. And more than two thirds of the active officiating ministers of England under the age of forty, and nineteen twentieths of the missionaries who have gone from Great Britain to the heathen, became pious at Sabbath schools."‡ "Henderson and Patterson, who have done wonders in Europe in regard to the Bible cause, both received their first religious impressions at Sabbath schools. And the celebrated Dr. Morrison, missionary to China, who has translated the whole Bible into Chinese, a language spoken by near three hundred millions of people, became pious at a Sabbath school."§

Now take these specimens, picked up here and there on the extended field of Sabbath school influence; and consider that the number of children receiving Sabbath school instruction is, in this country, at least *three hundred and fifty thousand*, and in the world, *one million five hundred thousand*; and remember how recent is the general establishment of these institutions, and how

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\* Fourth Report, p. 10.

† Fourth report, p. 16. ‡ Quarterly Reg. of the Am. Ed. Soc. Vol. 1, p. 32.

§ Christian Spectator, Vol. 4, p. 327.

gradual is commonly the developement of the influence of moral causes, especially on the young ; and then estimate the efficacy of Sabbath schools in promoting true piety in the earth.

5. And now, *fifthly*, let me just ask, in view of the statements that have been made,—are the intelligence and virtue of the people of this country the only security for the preservation of our liberties ? And, is it a consummation most devoutly to be desired, that pure and undefiled religion be, as God has promised it shall, extended through the earth ? How invaluable, then, what mind can fully estimate, THE BENEFITS TO OUR COUNTRY AND TO THE WORLD, of Sabbath schools ?

II. I proceed, as was proposed, to inquire, *in the second place*, WHAT ARE OUR DUTIES IN REGARD TO THESE IMPORTANT INSTITUTIONS ?

And here, I think I may venture to assume, as a result of the survey which has been taken, the conviction, in the mind of every hearer, that, as parents, patriots, philanthropists and Christians, we are sacredly bound to do all in our power to promote the prosperity and efficiency of Sabbath schools. Arguments you do not need to deepen this conviction. ‘Tell us,’ you say, ‘what we are to *do*, that we may contribute to this desirable result.’

1. In compliance with your demand, I remark, *first*, WE OUGHT ALL TO FEEL A DEEP INTEREST IN SABBATH SCHOOLS.

Are they such institutions as we have been contemplating ? Where, then, is the father, or the mother, the lover of his country, or of mankind, or of the cause of Christ, that ought not, habitually, to regard them with the deepest interest ? How pervading and active, especially, ought to be the interest felt by the Church in this chief hope of her continued prosperity and enlargement, till the glorious things which her Lord has spoken concerning her shall be accomplished ? And can it be that any church, or individual Christian, or philanthropist, or patriot, or parent, is indifferent to their influence and prosperity ? Alas ! our consciences and past conduct testify that, with very many of us, it has been strangely so, hitherto. We have known and admitted the value of these institutions, and sometimes expressed our commendation of them ; but

how seldom have they engaged our interested thought? how little pleasure have we taken in contemplating their progress? how little have the most of us done to promote their prosperity? These things certainly ought not so to be. And I hope we are, one and all, resolved they shall be no longer. And that they may not, let me exhort you, (beside complying with the directions hereafter to be given,) frequently to visit one and another of our Sabbath schools. "No interest," it has been truly said, "is so deep and lasting, as that which is excited by a *personal* knowledge of facts; for, however the sympathies may be excited by what we hear or read, yet the interest raised in the mind, before long, grows faint on the memory, and the heart soon loses that sensibility which may have been awakened for an object by glowing descriptions; while a single appeal, by that object itself being presented before us, claiming a *personal* care, enlists our patronage, and will leave the most lively impression on the mind, as it has excited a *feeling* interest in the *heart*, from a *personal* knowledge of its merits."\* Let me exhort you all, my hearers, to get this *personal* knowledge of these important institutions, by frequently visiting them,—if there is no other way in which you are brought to witness their interesting proceedings and results. And I do assure you, if you have a heart to feel for the welfare of mankind and for the glory of God, there is no place where you can spend a half hour with more unmingled pleasure.

2. I remark, *secondly*, that WE OUGHT ALL, HABITUALLY AND FERVENTLY, TO PRAY FOR SABBATH SCHOOLS.

Admirably as they are adapted to promote the benevolent ends for which they are instituted, they will effect little, none of the spiritual good aimed at, without the blessing of God; but, as to the grand purpose of their establishment, the teachers will labor, and the pupils will study, in vain. O how constant and earnest ought the teachers to be, in supplication for the guidance and blessing of the Holy Spirit, who alone can make them and their scholars wise unto everlasting life! And if the relation of Sabbath schools, to the prosperity of our country, and the promotion of the Redeemer's kingdom, be such

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\* American Sunday School Magazine, Vol. 2, p. 72.

as we have to-day found it to be, what is there for which the patriot, the philanthropist, the Christian, ought more frequently and importunately to plead with our prayer-hearing God for his effectual blessing? Especially should we remember these institutions, in our secret and family devotions, on the Sabbath; earnestly beseeching Him, with whom is the residue of the Spirit, to shed down plentifully, upon teachers and scholars, his gracious influence; that they may be interested in, and rightly understand, and feel the sanctifying power of his truth.

3. I add, *thirdly*, WE SHOULD ALL, AS WE CAN, GIVE OUR PERSONAL EFFORTS TO THE EXTENSION OF THE BENEFICIAL INFLUENCES OF SABBATH SCHOOLS. This we may do in various ways.

Some, yea many, who are not now so employed, *may become teachers*. All, whatever their rank, and their relations in life, ought to be willing to engage in this benevolent and most profitable labor, whose health and paramount duties will permit, and who can obtain a share in the work. Married as well as single persons, and middle aged as well as young, wherever,—not that it is perfectly convenient, but their circumstances will admit of it, ought to be ready to enlist and persevere in this self-denying but delightful service. And many more laborers are wanting in this most promising field, than can yet be procured. I regret exceedingly to be compelled to state, that in the schools connected with this congregation several additional teachers are now greatly needed, beside those who might find employment in them were their pupils increased as they ought to and might easily be. And in the city, efforts by our denomination for extending the inestimable benefits of these institutions by the establishment of new schools, have, from the want of teachers, been wholly suspended; although not more than half the children in the city, of a suitable age, are connected with the Sabbath schools of any denomination. Brethren and friends, shall these deficiencies any longer exist? Are there not many here who will, promptly and cheerfully, make the effort, and the sacrifice, if sacrifice be needful, to come forward and supply them? Permit me to hope, and to find, that the appeal has not been



made in vain. Employment can easily be found for all who will heartily engage in the work.

Another way in which we may materially contribute to the extension of the beneficial influences of Sabbath schools, is by *all the parents in this congregation sending their children, that are of a suitable age*. I say *all* the parents in this congregation; the rich and the more elevated in society, as well as the more humble and the poor; those who give religious instruction to their children at home, as well as those who neglect this important duty, so plainly enjoined upon all, in our text, and in other parts of the word of God. You have already heard the testimony on this point, of several highly respectable individuals, referred to for another purpose in a preceding part of this discourse. One of them says, "I once thought there was no good reason why the children of intelligent and pious parents,—parents able and willing to instruct their own children,—should be sent to the Sabbath school; being under the impression, that every thing in the way of tuition could be quite as well, if not better, done for them at home. But I have changed my mind on this point. I would urge children of all classes to attend. I think it my duty to send my own children, not merely for the sake of example, and to stimulate others, whose children may be less favorably situated, to do the same, but also from a persuasion that my children are really likely to be better managed, and, in some respects, better instructed, in a well conducted Sabbath school, than under my own roof. I would, therefore, most earnestly recommend to *all* parents to patronize Sabbath schools; *to make a point of sending their own children*; and to contribute, by all means in their power, to render these institutions better taught, more orderly, more efficient, and more useful. It is in the power of every one to help forward this cause. And, if my estimate of the subject is not altogether erroneous, it is manifest, that every one who lends his aid to the carrying on of a system so fraught with advantages to the young and the old, to parents and children, to the church and the world, ought to be reckoned a public benefactor."\*

The gentleman who has published to the world this noble

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\* Sabbath School Treasury, Vol. 2, p. 87.

testimony, was one of my honored and beloved instructors when I was preparing for the ministry. I had the privilege of being the superintendent of the Sabbath school to which he first sent his children. Those of them that have been of a suitable age have ever since attended. And the consequences have already been such, as the pious father and some of his children, will together rejoice in before the throne of God through eternal ages. And now, what intelligent or pious parent is there that hears me, who will not follow his advice and imitate his example? What parent is there that does not desire, and will not secure, for his beloved children, the intellectual, moral, and spiritual benefits, which, we have seen, result from a faithful attendance on well regulated Sabbath schools; and will not, by his own example, contribute to the extension, as far as possible, among other families that may be influenced by him, of these inestimable benefits? I desire not to dictate to, or control, any individual. But I do desire the promotion of the moral and spiritual improvement of all this beloved people. And, under the strong influence of this desire, I do earnestly recommend, and respectfully request, that you *all* send your children, that are of a suitable age, immediately and constantly to the Sabbath school.

Other ways in which parents and others may contribute to the extension of the happy influence of these institutions are, by *assisting the teachers in their efforts for the moral improvement of their pupils; and inducing others to commit their children to their benevolent care.* The parents and the elder brothers and sisters of the Sabbath school scholars should contribute, with diligence and cheerfulness, to their regular and punctual attendance; to their being well prepared with, and thoroughly understanding, their lessons; and to their receiving from them, and retaining, their proper moral and spiritual impression. And all should be ready to improve every opportunity to induce their friends and acquaintances, and especially the poor around them, to send their children, and continue their regular attendance. Very much more might be accomplished among us, in this way, than has been hitherto. Many of the children already in the schools, might, each, induce other children to attend. The

teachers in visiting their scholars would, on inquiry, find children of their neighbors, who do not belong to any Sabbath school, and might be induced to attend. And many whose circumstances will not admit of their becoming teachers, might devote a small portion of a week-day or of the Sabbath, to going through our streets and lanes in quest of children to be directed to some well conducted Sabbath school. Nearly all of us, were our hearts alive to the subject, might, in various ways, contribute to the increase of the numbers, and efficiency, of these admirable institutions.

Another way in which we may aid this good work, and the only additional one I shall mention, is, *by our pecuniary contributions*. Although the instruction in all our Sabbath schools is perfectly gratuitous ; it is at once apparent that their efficient management must be attended with very considerable expense. Rent is to be paid for a number of the school rooms. Class books and other papers are to be frequently provided. And libraries are to be established, and supplied with new publications as fast as they issue from the press, and are needed in the schools. These, and other incidental expenses are continually to be provided for. And how shall they be provided for ? By the teachers and superintendents ? Those who give their time, and solicitude, and labor to this benevolent work ? many of them devoted to arduous employments, during the week, to procure a subsistence, so that they have little or no time for reading, and other means of intellectual and moral improvement but the Sabbath, and, with a most commendable self-denial and a spirit of true benevolence, entirely forego this personal advantage, and devote nearly the whole of the day of sacred rest, except the portions of it spent in the house of God, to the anxieties and the toil of training our children in the ways of virtue and of eternal life ? Must they also sustain the burden of meeting the pecuniary demands of their schools ? They are willing to sustain their share. They do contribute for the purpose, constantly and liberally. But they cannot do the whole. For a large portion of the funds needed, they must depend on the Christian community ; and to them they confidently look for the needed assistance.

The Boston Sabbath School Union, in whose behalf more particularly I address you to-day, has under its direction the Sabbath schools, in different ways, connected with the Evangelical Congregational Societies in this city, including the three schools that attend public worship with this congregation. They have under their care, 18 schools; containing upwards of 2000 pupils, and nearly 300 teachers. For the accommodation of several of these schools, room-rent has to be paid. All of them are furnished with libraries; which, it is very important, should be considerably increased. Heretofore it has been usual to appropriate \$200, annually, for the increase of the libraries in the schools; but, in consequence of their scanty means, this Society, since it received the charge of the schools, about a year since, from the Society for the Religious and Moral Instruction of the Poor, has been able to spare only \$59 for this important purpose. They also greatly desire, and, if teachers can be obtained, (which they cannot but anticipate,) they intend speedily, to establish new schools; for the accommodation of which rent will have to be paid, and which must also be furnished with libraries. And, with these pressing demands upon them, when debts already contracted are paid, they will not have a dollar in their treasury; and they have no resource from which they expect to derive assistance, for several months to come, but from the contribution they now ask from this congregation.

Their claim is before you. And I doubt not it will be favorably received. The poor will cheerfully give their mites to aid an object, to them so richly fraught with blessings; and those favored with a competency, and with wealth, will show, by their liberal contributions, how justly they estimate the intellectual, and moral, and religious improvement, of their own beloved children, and of the rising generation of this ancient and highly favored metropolis. "Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." And, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."







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Influence of Religion on Liberty.

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DISCOURSE

IN COMMEMORATION OF

THE LANDING OF THE PILGRIMS,

DELIVERED AT PLYMOUTH,

DECEMBER 22, 1830.

BY BENJAMIN B. WISNER,  
*Pastor of the Old South Church in Boston.*



Boston:

PERKINS & MARVIN, 114, WASHINGTON STREET.

1831.

At a Meeting of the PILGRIM ASSOCIATION, held at Plymouth, Dec. 22, 1830 ;

*Resolved*, That the thanks of this Association be presented to the Rev. Dr. WISNER for the Discourse delivered by him, this day, in commemoration of the LANDING OF OUR PILGRIM FATHERS ; and that he be very respectfully and earnestly requested to furnish a copy for publication.

A true extract from the minutes,

ELIJAH DEXTER, { *Scribe of Association,*  
*pro tem.*

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*To the Rev. Dr. Wisner.*

DEAR SIR,

In the above expression of thanks, and in the request for the publication of your Discourse, we most cordially unite in behalf of the Third Congregational Church, and those associated with it in the religious services of this day.

Very respectfully,

your most obedient servants,

ANDREW MACKIE, }  
JOSIAH ROBBINS, } *Committee of*  
F. FREEMAN, } *Arrangements.*

*Plymouth, Dec. 22, 1830.*





## S E R M O N.



Deuteronomy xxxii. 9, 10, 11, 12.

THE LORD'S PORTION IS HIS PEOPLE ; JACOB IS THE LOT OF HIS INHERITANCE. HE FOUND HIM IN A DESERT LAND, AND IN THE WASTE HOWLING WILDERNESS : HE LED HIM ABOUT, HE INSTRUCTED HIM, HE KEPT HIM AS THE APPLE OF HIS EYE. AS AN EAGLE STIRRETH UP HER NEST, FLUTTERETH OVER HER YOUNG, SPREADETH ABROAD HER WINGS, TAKETH THEM, BEARETH THEM ON HER WINGS ; SO THE LORD ALONE DID LEAD HIM, AND THERE WAS NO STRANGE GOD WITH HIM.

THE occasion on which we are assembled is sacred to the memory of the Puritans. Besides the descendants of Jacob, no class of men have been made the instruments of so much good. The infidel historian of England,—“ who,” it has been justly said,\* “ through the whole course of his history, lies in wait for an opportunity of throwing discredit upon the cause of both religion and liberty,” and who, as every one knows that has any acquaintance with his writings, bore a specially malignant hate against the Puritans,—even Hume has said, that, in Great Britain, “ the precious spark of liberty ” was “ kindled, and was preserved, by the Puritans alone ; and it was to this sect, whose principles,” in his view, “ appear so frivolous and habits so ridiculous, that the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution.”† And to them, of course, we may add, are mankind indebted for all the influence of the example and the power and the benevo-

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\* By the English translator of the “ Essay on the Spirit and Influence of the Reformation by Luther, by Charles Villers, 8vo. London, 1805.” p. 103, Note.

† History of England, iii. 76. Philadelphia, 3vo. 1822.

lence of the British nation in diffusing the blessings of freedom and of Christianity through the earth. And here, on this western continent, the Puritans were the principal instruments in founding institutions that are now blessing more than twelve millions of people with domestic, social, civil and religious privileges in an extent and a purity never before known, and which are the admiration and the envy of the world. These institutions, if they shall be faithfully preserved and adequately extended, and our population shall advance as heretofore, will, in this land, before the children of some now living shall die, make thus happy two hundred millions of human beings. And from these institutions has gone forth an influence, which has already emancipated from the yoke of foreign despotism this whole continent; greatly meliorated the condition of the entire European population; shaken to its foundation, in that quarter of the globe, every fabric of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny; and promises to be, in the hand of Providence, the chief instrument of overturning and overturning and overturning in the earth, till, every where, "the yoke of" the people's "burden" shall be "broken," and "the oppressed" set "free," and "righteousness" shall "spring forth before all nations," and "the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever."\* Noble and signally honored race! In them, next after the seed of faithful Abraham, it seems, is to be fulfilled the promise, In you "shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."†

HOW WERE THEY PREPARED FOR BEING THEMSELVES SO SIGNALLY BLESSED, AND TO OTHERS SO SIGNAL A BLESSING?

This, it is at once perceived, is a radical and most important inquiry. The inhabitants of Spain or Italy could never

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\* Isaiah ix. 4; lviii. 6; lxi. 11; xxxii. 17.

† Says Villers, a French writer, in his Essay already referred to, written in 1802, "Among the vast number of remote and immediate causes which contributed to this great event [the first French revolution] must not be forgotten the American republic." "Who can tell what may happen to both worlds from the seducing example of that independence which the Americans obtained by conquest? What new position would the world acquire, if that example were followed? And without doubt, in the end, it will be so." p. 244.

have established and perpetuated the New England colonies, and accomplished the North American revolution. There must be a certain preparation, a particular character formed, before free institutions can be established among a people upon a permanent basis.

There must, in the first place, be a general diffusion of sufficient *intelligence* to enable the mass of the people to understand and vindicate their rights. History has demonstrated, and therefore I need not occupy time in proving, that a people sunk in ignorance are wholly incapable of acquiring and preserving the blessings of civil and religious freedom.

But knowledge alone does not prepare men for these blessings. Some of the most eminent men for talents and learning that have ever lived, have been the most obsequious minions of despotism. A community generally immoral cannot, from the nature of the case, enjoy the benefits of free institutions. Rational liberty exists in any country, in proportion as the sovereignty is lodged in and rightly exercised by the people. A perfectly free government is, in fact, "the people governing themselves by an expression of their moral feeling and their will in the form of laws." Of course, if the people are generally corrupt in their moral principles and habits, wholesome laws will not be enacted. And if they were enacted, they would not be executed: for, in such a government, those who are appointed to execute the laws will, of course, be guided in their administration by the tone of public sentiment. If wholesome laws exist, there must be in the community a moral sentiment that will approve and demand their execution. Hence the truth, which has become a political axiom, that VIRTUE IS THE FOUNDATION OF A REPUBLIC. The mere increase of knowledge among a population, who have been sunk in intellectual and moral, as well as political, debasement, may produce impatience of servitude, and lead to a revolution. But, as the people are not influenced by virtuous principle, and are, consequently, not accustomed to self-restraint, every man will think that liberty

consists in following his own inclinations ; and scenes of anarchy will ensue, which will soon cause the return of a general preference for "the calm of despotism." Ample confirmation of these remarks was furnished by the first French revolution ; and, I fear, is now furnishing by the Mexican and South American republics. But if, while intelligence has been diffused, virtuous principles have been imbibed, and virtuous habits formed, among a people ; then they are capable of self-government, they are qualified to be free.

This indispensable preparation for liberty had been made, and well made, among our Puritan ancestors. Hence their complete success in establishing essentially free institutions immediately upon their arrival in this western world, and in preserving them during the hundred and fifty years of their colonial existence, and, with the help of their brethren of a kindred spirit in other colonies, perfecting them, and placing them, as we trust, upon a durable basis, in our revolution.

The question, therefore, returns, with increased interest, How was this preparation made ? The correct answer, as it will be my principal object to show in this discourse, is, that IT WAS PRODUCED CHIEFLY BY THE DIRECT AND INDIRECT INFLUENCES OF RELIGION.

Christianity, all history testifies, is the most powerful moral cause that has ever been brought to operate on mankind. Affecting, as it necessarily does when its real or pretended claims are at all regarded, the very springs of human action, and entering into all the conduct and relations of life, it cannot but exert a mighty influence. Wherever it has prevailed, whether in its simplicity and purity, or in the various forms of distortion and corruption which it has been made to assume, it has invariably produced great effects.

As originally constituted by its divine Founder, the Church was a well ordered republic : all the members were placed on an equality, and there was no authority but that which was voluntarily given to superior intelligence and virtue ; and the



only power exercised was a moral power. Thus constituted, the Christian Church commenced its progress from the metropolis of Judea. And, in less than three hundred years, notwithstanding the most powerful and determined opposition, it spread itself over the whole Roman empire, which was then the whole known world.

The rulers and wise men of this world now began to perceive, that if the character and influence of the Church should remain unchanged, their usurped dominion would, for reasons which will be developed in the sequel of this discussion, soon come to an end. On the other hand, they wisely conjectured that, if its constitution could be so modified as to bring it into alliance with civil institutions, and make it subservient to political purposes, as Paganism had been, it would afford a far more efficient support of their despotic authority. The experiment was made ; and made with fatal success. The Ministers of Jesus Christ, who had been unmoved by the frowns of power, were fascinated and seduced by its smiles. The desired change was, gradually, but completely, effected. And most deplorable were the consequences. The great body of professed Christians soon relapsed into the grossest ignorance ; and “the mighty energies of a religion which connects man with eternity,” were made subservient to the base designs of an ambitious and profligate clergy in alliance with unprincipled rulers. And all Christendom was enveloped in a long night of thick intellectual, moral and political darkness.

The lamp of heaven was not, however, extinguished. During the whole period so justly denominated “the dark ages,” there were spots which its glimmering faintly illumined ; and now and then it shot forth a ray of light, which fell upon the mind of some favored individual, and scattered from it the gloom, which still rested on all around.

At length, after a lapse of ten centuries, the bright morning of the Reformation dawned upon the earth. An event fraught with more blessings to mankind than any other since

that which angels announced in the field of Bethlehem, singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good-will to men."\*

The grand moving spirit of the Reformation, as every one knows, was the love of religion. No views of secular or ecclesiastical ambition mingled with and corrupted the motives of the first and principal actors in its wonderful scenes. They were excited and sustained and carried forward in their noble achievements, by a single, ardent, enduring and all conquering love for what they deemed the cause of God and of human salvation.

The fundamental principle of the Reformation was—that **THE BIBLE IS THE SOLE DEPOSITORY OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH ; AND THAT, CONSEQUENTLY, TO ASCERTAIN THE DOCTRINES AND DUTIES OF RELIGION, THE FIRST AND FINAL RESORT MUST BE TO THE SCRIPTURES.** "THE BIBLE," said they, "**THE BIBLE IS THE RELIGION OF PROTESTANTS.**"† Truly wonderful, and equally salutary, were the effects produced by this single principle.

To qualify themselves as translators and thorough interpreters of the Bible, the Reformers saw they must make themselves acquainted with the original languages of Scripture, and with the various stores of ancient learning so intimately connected with the science of sacred criticism. And to expose and refute the reasonings of their antagonists, they found it necessary to make themselves familiar with the writings of the Fathers, and the history of councils and decretals, and of the fluctuations and changes of civil and ecclesiastical power, and the various systems of ancient philosophy. To these studies they applied themselves, with great diligence and success. And to facilitate their progress, and

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\* If the reader desires to see ample confirmation of this statement, he will find it in Villers' Essay ; a work that ought to be studied by every friend and advocate of civil and religious freedom.

† Chillingworth afterward thus expressed their fundamental principle. The meaning of this maxim is not, of course, as some have pretended to understand it, that this was the only sentiment which the Reformers regarded as essential, but (what the maxim expresses) that all doctrines and authoritative precepts and examples in regard to religion must be derived ultimately from Scripture.

diffuse as extensively as possible this important knowledge, they established colleges, and collected libraries, and sent forth innumerable publications. The Protestant universities, moreover, were not, as those of the Catholics had been, resorted to by few but youth destined to the priesthood. They were open alike to all; and were soon crowded with students. Emulation was enkindled; facilities of improvement were rapidly multiplied; and a progress made in knowledge which, in preceding ages, would have been thought impossible.

Another effect of the fundamental principle of the Reformers was, to take nothing upon authority. The Church of Rome said, *Submit, without examination, to authority.* The Protestants said, *Examine, and submit only to your own conviction.* And wherever the maxim was adopted, the shackles which had for centuries bound fast the human intellect were broken, and the barriers erected against investigation and the communication of thought were overthrown. Men were made free in the inmost sanctuary of the soul, and dared to look freely and boldly around them. Light broke forth, and shot its rays in every direction. Mental activity and energy were greatly promoted; and information extensively and rapidly diffused.

A violent controversy was also carried on between the Reformers and the Papists, which served still more to rouse and invigorate the minds of men. So great were the interests at stake, and so important the consequences of victory or defeat, that every power of those engaged in the contest was put in requisition, and exerted to the very utmost. Intellectual energy was thus greatly and rapidly increased, and knowledge of all kinds advanced. And this influence, every where, preponderated immensely in favor of the Protestants; because, while their adversaries were hampered by the dicta and conflicting opinions of Fathers, and the decrees of Councils, and the bulls of Popes, they went directly to the Bible,

and, with untrammelled minds, inquired, What saith the Lord ?

Another consideration which must not be omitted is, that the simple study of the Bible itself, if it be pursued with any measure of attention and diligence, produces a wonderful effect in elevating the intellectual character. No mind can be frequently thus employed without being strengthened. While the repeated, and especially the believing, contemplation of the sublime truths with which it thus becomes acquainted—the wonderful facts disclosed in the Scriptures concerning the nature and ways of God, the method of redeeming mercy, the realities of eternity, and its connection with the feelings and actions of the present life—must exert, all experience proves does invariably exert, a powerful influence in widening the range of thought and giving a new and lofty tone to the mind.

All these influences it was the constant aim of the Reformers to make bear as extensively and powerfully as possible upon *the mass of the people*. This was another effect of their leading principle. It says to the laity as well as to the clergy, “Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good.” It refers *all* “to the law and to the testimony,” and makes every man directly responsible to God for his opinions and conduct. Hence, wherever the Reformation extended, a general and ardent desire was immediately excited among the people, to qualify themselves to read the Scriptures, and the numerous other writings on religion, with which they were furnished by their new instructors. Schools and academies, as well as colleges, were extensively established, and filled with pupils. While, every where, the minds of all were continually roused to action, and furnished with knowledge, by the instructions of the living preacher ; who was stimulated, by love for the souls of his people, and by the desire of triumph for his party in the great moral conflict going forward, to promote as extensively as possible, among



all classes, and by every means, a thorough knowledge of the doctrines and duties of religion.

By these various means, in those countries which embraced the Protestant faith, science and literature, in all their departments, were greatly and rapidly advanced and improved ; and general information was diffused among the *people* to an extent at that time utterly unprecedented. Wherever the principles of the Reformation were *completely* triumphant, colleges and universities were opened to all who chose to resort to them, and the means of acquiring what we denominate a common education were furnished to the whole community.\*

Nearly as great, and yet more important in its influence, was the change produced in the *moral* character of the people among whom Protestantism prevailed. They were not sent to the Bible, and taught with so much fidelity by their spiritual guides, without fruit unto holiness. Multitudes sincerely embraced the unadulterated religion of the Scriptures. And the very object of this religion, and its unfailing influence when received into the heart, is to make men virtuous. It teaches them to restrain and subdue their passions, to master their own spirits, and govern themselves ; and to esteem as highly, and make as vigorous efforts to maintain, the rights of others as their own, and even to sacrifice every other interest but that of their salvation to the public good. Nor is this influence wholly confined to the truly pious ; but, where they are found in any considerable numbers, it extends from them, with greater or less power, through the whole community ; affecting, more or less, the opinions, the hopes and fears, the motives and conduct of all. Such was

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\* The provision made by the Congregationalists in New England, and by the Presbyterians in Scotland, for giving to all classes a common education, is well known. One of the Canons of the Synod of Dort, in which nearly all the Reformed Churches then existing were represented, enjoins upon the Consistories of the several congregations to provide for the establishment and support of parochial schools. I use the phrase 'Reformed Churches' as it is used by Mosheim in his Ecclesiastical History, to denote those churches which agreed, for the most part, in doctrine and discipline with the Church of Geneva, in distinction from those of the Lutheran persuasion. Among the Lutherans also the common people were almost universally qualified to read the Scriptures.

actually the result, in an eminent degree, of that revival of primitive piety which followed the Reformation.\*

By this intellectual and moral elevation, the people were prepared for a government of laws. And the consequence was that, in all countries which embraced the Protestant faith, political changes speedily occurred decidedly advantageous to the people.†

There were also other influences and results which must not be passed without notice.

The application of their master principle by the Reformers led to the discovery of that fundamental truth, so fully recognized in the Scriptures, that *God alone is lord of the conscience*. This all-important truth was, indeed, but partially understood, for a time, by the most enlightened promoters of the Reformation. By some it was disputed, and even denied. But by that class of Protestants from whom we are descended, it was, at length, fully understood, and received as a fundamental truth. Thus the radical principle of *religious* freedom was elicited ; which, by an easy and natural gradation, led to the discovery of political rights.‡

Another effect of that recourse to the Scriptures which resulted from the Reformation was, the speedy and universal discovery, by those brought under its influence, that there was no warrant for that system of priestly domination by which, throughout Christendom, the very minds and con-

\* "Nothing is worthy of more serious attention than the difference in point of morals which is found between Catholic and Protestant countries. A degree of dissoluteness and licentiousness appears in the former, which always forms a striking contrast with what is seen in the latter, which, bad as they are, may be reckoned pure and correct when compared with Catholic countries." Villers, p. 346, Note.

† In the now Protestant cantons of Switzerland, in Holland, and in Great Britain, the form of the governments was changed, or essentially modified, in favor of the people. And in the Protestant States of Germany, in Denmark and Sweden, though the constitution of the governments was not altered, they became practically less despotic. Villers, pp. 172—283.

‡ "The will to be free in matters of conscience is the same at bottom with the will to be free in matters of state." Villers, p. 181. "There is not a truth to be gathered from history more certain, or more momentous, than this, that civil liberty cannot long be separated from religious liberty, without danger, and ultimately without destruction, to both. Wherever religious liberty exists, it will, first or last, bring in, and establish, political liberty. Wherever it is suppressed, the church establishment will, first or last, become the engine of despotism, and overthrow, unless it be itself overthrown, every vestige of political right." Judge Story's Centennial Discourse at Salem in 1828, p. 46.

sciences of men had, for so many centuries, been bound as with fetters of iron. The authority of the Pope was utterly renounced by all Protestants. The question now arose, How ought the Church to be governed? and was, unfortunately, not, in all cases, determined by the sole authority of Scripture. In those countries where the government conducted the work of reformation, the Church was moulded to suit the views and interests of the rulers: ecclesiastical dignitaries were retained, who governed the Church in subordination to the king. But where the Reformation was begun and carried on by the people, the constitution of the Church was generally settled much after the primitive model. The rights of the people were acknowledged. Jesus Christ was held to be the sole head of the church; and whatever powers pertain to the body as a voluntary association, were vested in the whole company of believers, and exercised, either by themselves, or their representatives. A form of church-government was instituted essentially popular; which, it will be at once obvious to every reflecting mind, would operate favorably for civil liberty, just as certainly as men's principles and habits will influence their actions.\* An influence too, which would be greatly augmented in that age, from the intimate connection in which all had been accustomed to view the Church and the State.

And when led to investigate the pretensions of the Pope to raise up and cast down kings, men were naturally conducted to the inquiry, by what authority kings exercised their dominion. And the Catholic princes who attempted by

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\* "No bishop, no king," was a maxim of that determined enemy of popular rights, James I. of England. During the progress of the Reformation "it was formed into an express and fundamental maxim of state, that Catholicism was the best support of absolute power, while Protestantism was favorable to rebellion and the republican spirit. It would not, even in our days, be possible to drive this maxim out of the heads of many statesmen." Villers, pp. 276, 277. "It soon became apparent [in the reign of Elizabeth in England] that they [the Puritans] *tended naturally towards republicanism*; for certain it is that monarchy and episcopacy, the throne and the altar, are much more nearly connected, than writers of bad faith, or little reflection, have sought to persuade mankind." "Besides *this insensible but natural inclination towards democracy, which arises from the principles of a popular church-government*, there was another cause why the current should set in that direction; it was only under commonwealths that the Puritans saw their beloved discipline flourish." London Quarterly Review, xvi. 517, 518.

force of arms to put a stop to the Reformation, drove its advocates to the discovery that sovereigns may be lawfully resisted when they encroach upon the rights of their subjects. "These novelties," said Francis I. of France, when conversing, one day, on the influence of the Reformation, "These novelties tend to nothing less than the overthrow of all monarchy, divine and human."\* And the actual result was that, in a great portion of Europe, the Papal tyranny was overthrown; and in all countries in which the Reformation prevailed, the prerogatives of monarchs were much reduced, or new governments were instituted essentially republican.

From this general survey permit me now to turn your attention to a brief view of the progress of the Reformation in England. In that nation it was begun and carried on by the government, while in the other countries to which it extended, the leaders in commencing and conducting it were of the people. This peculiarity of the Reformation in England was productive of many evils, from some of which the people of that country are not wholly relieved to this day; yet, in one respect it was overruled for a good which far more than counterbalances those evils. In other countries the work of reform was generally carried forward, almost at once, to the extent of the views of the learned and pious instruments employed by Providence in its promotion; and thus established, by universal consent, in a state of much imperfection: and thus has it been continued in those countries to the present time. But in England, the government, in its capriciousness and tyranny, stopped in the work of reform, far short of the other Protestant Churches, and of the wishes of its own most able and devoted Reformers. This produced collision; led to rigid examination of the rights and duties of kings and subjects, first in regard to religion, and then in regard to government; and ultimately struck out that spirit of religious and civil freedom, which

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\* Villers, p. 139.



the Puritans preserved from extinction in the mother country, and brought to maturity in this western world.

Henry VIII. began the Reformation in England, to gratify his furious passions : and, as his passions dictated, he conducted it, till his death ; none scarcely, daring to utter a whisper of opposition to his capricious and tyrannical proceedings. One circumstance, however, occurred which, in the present connection, is worthy of special notice. While “a most obedient son of the Papacy,” Henry published a book “against Luther, in defence of the seven sacraments of the Romish Church ;” which procured from the Pope, for him and his successors, the title of “Defender of the Faith.”\* This book Luther answered, with a boldness and superiority of argument which greatly exasperated Henry. These circumstances probably had an influence in producing the unquestioned fact, that Luther and Lutheranism had comparatively little effect on the reformation in England, and the principal direct influence from abroad in promoting it was sought and emanated from the famous John Calvin, the other great leader in the work of pulling down the Popish hierarchy.† Many English students resorted to Geneva, to receive the instructions of this distinguished theologian. His writings, too, were extensively circulated, and studied, and exerted a powerful influence in England. Two results followed of great importance to the cause of civil and religious liberty. The divines of England became familiarly acquainted with, and many of them warmly attached to, the form of church-government instituted by Calvin at Geneva, which was far more democratical than the ecclesiastical polity established in the countries reformed under the influence of Luther. And the peculiar form of religious doctrine at first propagated, and for a long time universally adopted,

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\* Neal's History of the Puritans, American edition, i. 56.

† Another circumstance which subsequently had a still greater influence in producing this result was, the invitation to England, early in the reign of Edward VI. of Peter Martyr and Martin Bucer, distinguished divines of the continent, who were of the Reformed or Calvinistic class of Protestants, and who were made divinity professors at Oxford and Cambridge. Neal i. 94.

in England, was that usually designated by the title Calvinistic.\* The influence which the former of these results would exert on the cause of religious and civil liberty has been already stated ; that of the latter shall be evinced by the statements of another, who thought not, most probably, what honorable testimony he was giving to this oft maligned system of religious doctrine. A late writer of great force and eloquence,† in delineating the character of the Puritans, in which, he justly considers, is to be found the main spring of their wonderful achievements, thus expresses himself. “The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar character from the daily contemplation of superior beings and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging, in general terms, an overruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being, for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know Him, to serve Him, to enjoy Him, was with them the great end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on the intolerable brightness, and to commune with Him face to face. Hence originated their contempt of earthly distinctions. The difference between the greatest and the meanest of mankind seemed to vanish, when compared with the boundless interval which separated the whole race from Him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognized no title to superiority but His favor ; and, *confident of that*, they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they felt *assured* that they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had

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\* Neal, i. 544—549.

† The writer of the review of Milton. Edinburgh Review, xlii. 339.

charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands ; their diadems, crowns of glory which should never fade away. On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt : For they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language ; nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier hand. The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged—on whose slightest action the spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest, *who had been destined, before the heaven and earth was created*, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away. Events which short-sighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes, had been *ordained* on his account. For his sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed. For his sake the Almighty had proclaimed his will, by the pen of the evangelist, and the harp of the prophet. He had been rescued by no common Deliverer, from the grasp of no common foe. He had been ransomed by the sweat of no vulgar agony, by the blood of no earthly sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had been darkened, that the rocks had been rent, that the dead had arisen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of her expiring God.” How just, as well as eloquent, this delineation ? And how pervading, in this noble character, the doctrines of the evangelical system ? How vital in its production, does the candid observer perceive, the doctrines of *divine decrees*, of *assurance*, and of *the perseverance of the saints*, those distinctive peculiarities of the Calvinistic faith ?\* Indeed, my hearers, much as the name of Calvin has been scoffed at and loaded with reproach by many sons of freedom, there is not a historical proposition more susceptible of complete demonstration than this, that

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\* “In tracing the coherence among the systems of modern theology, we may observe, that the doctrine of absolute decrees has ever been intimately connected with the enthusiastic spirit.” “The spirit, too, of enthusiasm, bold, daring, and uncontrolled, strongly disposed their [the Puritans] minds to adopt republican tenets.” Hume, Hist. of England, iii. 372, 690.

NO MAN HAS LIVED TO WHOM THE WORLD IS UNDER GREATER OBLIGATIONS FOR THE LIBERTY IT NOW ENJOYS THAN JOHN CALVIN. That liberty has been derived, all of it, from the Puritans;\* and no individual had so much influence in forming the principles and character of the Puritans as Calvin.

Henry VIII. was succeeded in the throne of England by the amiable and pious Edward VI. ; during whose short reign the Reformation was carried forward to the state in which it is now by law established in that kingdom. All the English Reformers were gratified with the ecclesiastical changes made in this reign : most of them, however, hoping for further modifications ; which would, no doubt, have been made, had the life of Edward been prolonged.†

His untimely death made way for the accession of “the bloody Mary.” Papacy was restored ; and a violent persecution of the Protestants ensued. This was a most untoward event. Yet it was a necessary part of that “severe discipline” by which Providence was preparing a portion of the nation for the discovery and maintenance of the principles of religious and civil freedom. The sincere Protestants, both ministers and laymen, to save their lives, retired in great numbers, to the continent, and, in various places, were kindly received and entertained, especially at Frankfort, where they were most numerous. Here, simply with a view to obtain accommodation for public worship, and not give offence to the French congregation whose church they were permitted to use a portion of every Sabbath, they agreed to vary their mode of conducting the public service from that which had been enjoined by king Edward. This, after a time, produced among them an unhappy contention, which issued in the division, ever since continued, into CONFORMISTS and PURITANS. The latter party were, at last, constrained to

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\* Principles and institutions in some degree popular had, indeed, existed in the English government, derived from the Saxons ; but they had, when the Puritans arose, been either subverted, or their influence done away, by the encroachments of the king's prerogative ; so that the first principles of liberty had to be struck out anew.

† Neal, i. 86—125.



leave Frankfort, and retired to Geneva, where they were received with great kindness, and had a church assigned them for their worship. Here, deeming themselves released from obligation to use the service-book of king Edward, as it was "now set aside by act of Parliament," and they were "in a strange land," they adopted, and used for several years while their exile continued, a form of worship and discipline resembling that of the Genevan Church, and materially differing from that soon to be re-established in their own country.\* For this simpler liturgy and more democratic church-government they formed a strong attachment, which was to be productive of important effects upon their return to England. While residing at Geneva they also prepared and published a translation of the Bible, with notes, in which they were led, by the persecution carrying on by the government at home, to assert the lawfulness, in certain cases, of resisting the authority of kings. This Bible was afterwards generally circulated in England; and the "traiterous conceits," as king James styled them, in its notes,† no doubt had an influence upon the political feeling of the nation.

Mary died in 1558, and was succeeded by Elizabeth, who had been educated in the Protestant faith. Papacy was again abolished, and the Reformed religion restored, as it had been established under Edward VI.: absolute authority being given, by act of parliament, to the queen and her successors in regard to religious doctrine, worship and discipline; "all persons in any public employs, whether civil or ecclesiastical," being required to take "an oath in recognition of the queen's supremacy in all causes ecclesiastical and civil, on penalty of forfeiting all their promotions in the Church, and of being declared incapable of holding any public office."‡ The Puritans, who had returned home upon Elizabeth's accession, all took the oath; hoping that,

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\* Neal, i. 148—155.

† See Neal ii. 41, and the account of the authorized English version of the Bible prefixed to Dr. Adam Clarke's Commentary.

‡ Neal, i. 166.

in the exercise of her supremacy, the queen would effect the further reformation they so ardently desired. Happy would have been the consequences, in many respects, had the hope been realized. But then, the Puritans would have obtained from the government what they wished, and been satisfied; and the principles of religious and civil liberty would not have been elicited. Providence, therefore, in wisdom, permitted the queen to decide, that there should be no more changes in religion, and that all must, under severe penalties, conform, in every particular, to the established worship.\* And this determination she proceeded rigorously to enforce, by deprivation, fines, imprisonment, banishment and execution; not permitting even the parliament to interfere. The effect was, what the effect of persecution commonly is, to make the sufferers more devotedly attached to their principles, and to drive them to new applications of them, and new methods of defending them. With these views the Puritans, under the guidance of the fundamental principle of the Reformation, were stimulated to a more diligent and prayerful study of the Scriptures. And various and most happy were the consequences.

They became convinced of the moral and perpetual obli-

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\* The controversy at first related chiefly to the habits of the clergy and the ceremonies of worship. The Puritans have often been greatly blamed for their stiffness in regard to these, in themselves, confessedly, indifferent things. Among their descendants, for whom, at so great sacrifices, they obtained so rich an inheritance, are found those who think they were highly censurable in this particular. But let their reasons be attentively considered, and let candor decide. They alleged, 1. That the *habits* were the known badges of popery, and regarded extensively by the people, who had been brought up under the Romish superstition, as giving validity to the administrations of the priests; and the *ceremonies* were considered as having an inherent efficacy: it was therefore essential to a thorough reformation that both should be laid aside. 2. Those who enjoined them admitted that they were not required by scriptural authority; but the fundamental principle of the Reformation was, that the Scriptures are the sufficient and *only* rule of faith and practice. 3. Christ is the sole lawgiver of his Church, and has directed all things necessary to be observed in it to the end of the world; therefore, when he has indulged a liberty to his followers, it is as much their duty to maintain it, as to observe any other of his precepts. If things acknowledged to be *indifferent* may be *imposed* by the civil authority, then that authority may *take away liberty of conscience* where Christ has left it *free*. Such a principle ought to be resisted, at all times, and in its every application. *Obsta principiis*, was the grand principle with the Puritans, in reference to encroachments upon their religious rights, as it was afterwards with their descendants in the American colonies in reference to the violation of their civil rights. "The wisdom of zeal for any object is not to be measured by the particular nature of that object, but by the nature of the *principle*, which the circumstances of the times, or of society, have identified with such object." President Quincy's Centennial Address at Boston, in 1830, p. 16.

gation of the fourth commandment ; and “were,” consequently, their historian attests, “strict observers of the Christian Sabbath or Lord’s day. It was,” he says, “a distinguishing mark of a Puritan in these times,” i. e. in Elizabeth’s reign, “to see him going to church twice a day, with his Bible under his arm. And while others were at plays and interludes, at revels, or walking in the fields, or at the diversions of bowling, fencing, &c. on the evening of the Sabbath, these, with their families, were employed in reading the Scriptures, singing psalms, catechising their children, repeating sermons, and prayer. Nor was this only the work of the Lord’s day ; but they had their hours of devotion on the week days, esteeming it their duty to take care of the souls, as well as the bodies, of their servants. They were circumspect as to all the excesses of eating, drinking, apparel, and lawful diversions, being frugal in housekeeping, industrious in their particular callings, honest and exact in their dealings, and solicitous to give to every one his own.” They “were not,” indeed, “without their failings. Their notions of the civil and religious rights of mankind were,” as yet, “derived too much from the Theocracy of the Jews, which was now at an end. Their behaviour was severe and rigid, far removed from the fashionable freedoms and vices of the age ; and possibly they might be too censorious, in not making those distinctions between youth and age, grandeur and mere decency, as the nature and circumstances of things would admit. But, with all their faults, *they were the most pious and devout people in the land.*”<sup>\*</sup> With this character, they were fitted to govern themselves ; they were now prepared to be free. And speedily did a wise and gracious Providence lead them to the discovery and successful maintenance of the principles of religious and civil freedom.

Hitherto Puritans and Conformists had agreed in the

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<sup>\*</sup> Neal, i. 560.

opinion that it belonged to the government alone to prescribe forms of discipline and worship for the Church, differing only in their views of the extent to which the government ought to proceed in laying aside the additions which, all believed, had been made to the model left by the Apostles.\* But in the discussions produced by Elizabeth's perseverance in refusing to proceed further in the work of reform, and by her severe measures for enforcing uniformity, juster principles were evolved. Early in Elizabeth's reign, Mr. Cartwright, a leader of the Puritans, published "An Admonition to the Parliament," in which he maintained, that "the Christian sovereign ought not to be called Head under Christ of the particular and visible churches within his dominions," and that "the civil magistrate ought not to ordain ceremonies, or determine controversies in the Church, as long as they do not intrench upon his temporal authority."†

Some years after the same Mr. Cartwright maintained in his divinity lectures at Cambridge, and published, that "The names and functions of archbishops and archdeacons ought to be abolished, *as having no foundation in Scripture*. The offices of the lawful ministers of the Church *ought to be reduced to the apostolical institution*; the bishop to preach the word of God and pray, and deacons to take care of the poor. The government of the Church ought not to be intrusted with bishop's chancellors, or the officials of archdeacons; but every Church should be governed by its own minister and presbyters. Bishops should not be created by civil authority, but ought to be fairly chosen by the Church."‡ Hitherto both parties had allowed that the ecclesiastical constitution might be very much regulated by convenience and motives of state policy. Here was the discovery and advancement of the principle that, in this department as well as in that of doctrine, nothing should be determined or sanctioned without the warrant of Scrip-

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\* Neal, ii. Author's Preface, ix.

† Neal, i. 173.

‡ Neal, i. 279.



ture. This, it will be at once apparent, was another very important step in the developement of the principles of religious and civil liberty. Mr. Cartwright, for advancing such "dangerous doctrines," was deprived of his professorship and expelled the university, and constrained to go into voluntary banishment. But his opinions were embraced by the whole body of the Puritans.

In the mean time, "several of the deprived ministers" residing in and about London, had, upon "solemn consultation with their friends" and earnest "prayer," come to an "agreement, that it was their duty, in their present circumstances, to break off from the public churches, and to assemble, as they had opportunity, in private houses, or elsewhere, to worship God in a manner that might not offend against the light of their consciences."\* The assemblies instituted in consequence of this determination were soon suppressed by the government. But the conduct and motives of those who had held them were, by their Puritan brethren, generally approved. And thus was developed the important principle that it was lawful, for conscience sake, to resist the civil and ecclesiastical authority in separating from the Established Church.

While these discussions and developements were going forward, the queen and the bishops had been constantly devising new expedients, and increasing the severity of their measures, for enforcing rigid uniformity. These violent proceedings at length drove "multitudes to a total separation, and so far prejudiced" them "as not to allow the Church of England to be a true Church, nor her ministers true ministers; they renounced all communion with her, not only in the prayers and ceremonies, but in hearing the word and the sacraments. These were the people called BROWNISTS, from one *Robert Brown*, a preacher in the diocese of Norwich;" who, besides the errors just mentioned and some others, first among the Reformers in England maintained the

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\* Neal, i. 252.

following truths, so fundamental in their bearing upon religious and civil liberty, viz. "that, according to Scripture, every Church ought to be confined within the limits of a single congregation, and that the government should be democratical;" that churches should be constituted by "such as desired to be members making a confession of their faith in the presence of each other, and signing a covenant; that the whole power of admitting and excluding members, with the deciding of all controversies, was in the brotherhood; that church officers, for preaching the word and taking care of the poor, were to be chosen by the free suffrages of the brethren; and that in church censures, there should be an entire separation of the ecclesiastical and civil sword." These are the principles afterwards adopted by the Independents in England, and, with some slight modifications, by the Congregationalists in this country. Brown published his sentiments in 1582. Not long after he gathered a separate congregation upon his own principles; whose members the persecuting vigilance of the government compelled to flee to Holland, where they formed themselves into a church, which soon, however, fell into divisions, and, being deserted by its pastor, who returned to the Established Church, was at last broken up. But the seeds of separation which Brown had sown in several parts of England, were not destroyed. His followers increased; and, having discarded his extravagancies and most of his errors, became a considerable body in the latter part of this and the beginning of the subsequent reign.\*

James I. succeeded Elizabeth in 1603. From him the Puritans entertained high expectations, as he had been educated a Presbyterian, and had professed a warm attachment for that discipline. But, doubtless for the same reasons as in the case of Elizabeth, Providence disappointed their ex-

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\* Neal, i. 376—379. "In the reign of Elizabeth, Sir Walter Raleigh declared in Parliament, that the Brownists alone, in their various congregations, were increased to the number of twenty thousand.—Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journals of the Parliaments during the reign of queen Elizabeth. London, 1682. p. 517."

pectations. James followed in the course of his predecessor, adopting additional and more rigorous measures against the Puritans. These new severities drove yet greater numbers to Holland; among whom was the venerated ROBINSON, and those who, with him, formed the English Church at Leyden.\* And with them went those pure and almost perfect principles of religious liberty, and those elements of civil freedom, which had been struck out by the instrumentality of Robert Brown; separated, however, as has been intimated, from his extravagances and most of his errors.†

But even here, the depositories of these principles and elements, fraught with so many blessings to mankind, are not permitted to remain. Had such been the arrangements of Providence, the sacred treasure would soon have been lost, from the encroachments of a foreign population and of surrounding corruptions.‡ To preserve it, these martyrs in the cause of religious and civil freedom determine to abandon the comforts of their newly acquired home, and encounter the dangers of the ocean, and the perils of this western wilderness. They embark for America, and establish the colony of Plymouth; and are soon followed by a more numerous band, of similar principles and spirit, who found the colony of Massachusetts Bay.

And now, a stranger to the history would be ready to say, being escaped from the restraints and oppressions of civil and ecclesiastical tyranny, we shall see their principles at once carried out to their full extent, and perfect religious and political freedom at length obtaining an existence in the world.

\* Neal, ii. Chapters 1 and 2.

† Among the errors of Brown which the Independents, of whom Robinson and others were the leaders, rejected, one of the most important was, requiring in those who joined their churches a renunciation and denunciation of the Church of England. "If any," says Governor Winslow, (as quoted in the Appendix to Rev. Mr. Storrs' Sermon at Plymouth, Dec. 22, 1826, p. 39,) "if any joining us have, with the manifestation of their faith and holiness, held forth therewith separation from the Church of England, I have divers times heard either Mr. Robinson our pastor, or Mr. Brewster our elder, stop them forthwith, *showing them that we required no such thing at their hands*; but only to hold forth faith in Christ Jesus, holiness in the fear of God, and submission to every appointment and ordinance of God." Those are therefore in error who represent Robinson and the Church at Leyden as rigid "Separatists."

‡ See Morton's New England Memorial, pp. 18—20.

But, no. Our fathers were not yet sufficiently instructed in the difficult lesson, nor was the way yet fully prepared in the inscrutable arrangements of Providence. Not only did they, of necessity, retain an allegiance to the British crown, but, by their own voluntary act, they immediately determined that none should be freemen but members of their churches ; that no church should be gathered without the consent of the civil magistrate ; and that the people, of whatever persuasion, should be taxed for the support of their ministers ; and enforced these regulations with rigor, by fines, imprisonment, and banishment. Institutions wide, indeed, from those of perfect religious and civil freedom. But let not your wonder at what has often been, inconsiderately, called their inconsistency,\* turn off your contemplation from the wisdom of an overruling Providence, in providing, by this very means, for the ultimate perfect developement and establishment of the principles of religious and civil liberty. Had not our fathers excluded, as they did, all other sects from authority and influence among them, the English hierarchy would soon have extended to them here its iron grasp ; and thus, the whole object of their emigration would have been frustrated, and the spirit of freedom, both civil and religious, extinguished. As it was,—though evils resulted, some of which continue in their influence to this day,—yet the *far greater good* was accomplished, of keeping alive, and further and further developing, in the independence of their churches and the freedom of their elections, the principles of religious and civil liberty, and guarding them effectually from extinction, and even from serious encroachment.†

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\* *Inconsiderately* called their inconsistency, because every one acquainted with the circumstances of that age, must feel, that it would have been little, if any, short of a miracle that could have brought them, in their circumstances, to a full understanding of the principles of religious and civil liberty. See this ground of their vindication well stated, by the Hon. Judge Story, in his Centennial Discourse at Salem, pp. 45—51, and by the Hon. Edward Everett, in his Centennial Address at Charlestown in 1830, pp. 42—44.

† This is the principal ground of vindication of the Fathers of New England in regard to their religious institutions. See it ably and triumphantly stated in President Quincy's Centennial Address at Boston, Sept. 1830, pp. 25—29, and Note F. The "union" they established "between church and state," Judge Story has styled, in his Centennial Discourse, p. 55, a "fundamental error." I have myself called it, in



In the mean while, by the influence of their Puritan brethren who had remained in England, the throne and the hierarchy had been overturned under Charles I.; and toleration and a high degree of political liberty engrafted into the British constitution by the revolution of 1688; and civil and ecclesiastical oppression in the old world had driven to the colonies south of New England multitudes who had been trained under the influence of principles and forms of church-government derived, like those of the Puritans, from the Reformers of Geneva.\* And the emigrants who were not of this class were, most of them, Protestants, who had adopted the principles established in England on the accession of William and Mary.†

At length, when the fulness of time was come, the all-wise Ruler of the nations permitted those usurpations and oppressions on the part of the parent country, which led to our independence, and consummated our *political freedom*. And now was to be formed a government for confederated States, all possessing equal rights, in regard to which the arrangements of Providence had been such, in respect to re-

a former publication, "a material error." History of the Old South Church in Boston, p. 4. It was, indeed the cause of real and great evils, some of which continue to this day, and which I have stated in the History just referred to, Sermon III. Further investigation and reflection have, however, led me to doubt whether it should be called an error. I see not by what other arrangement they could, *in their circumstances*, have secured the privileges for which they had emigrated, and preserved among them, for more perfect developement, the principles of religious and civil freedom.—The valuable purposes to be effected by this arrangement have long since been fully accomplished. Why then should it, under any modification, be continued? It is strange indeed that in Massachusetts alone of all the free States of this Union, the support of religious institutions should still be *required* by the *State*. When will this Commonwealth imitate the example of all the other members of the confederacy, in abolishing entirely and forever all connection between church and state, and thus perfecting her religious and civil freedom?

\* Of this class were the whole body of emigrants from Holland, Scotland, and the north of Ireland, and a large portion of those from Germany, settled in the middle and southern colonies.

† The only exception was the colony of Maryland, established by Lord Baltimore, and composed chiefly of Roman Catholics. But even upon these, attached as they were to a religious system whose essential principle is blind submission to authority, such had been the influence of the persecutions they had suffered from the Church and government of England, that, in settling their government, they enacted, that "no persons professing to believe in Jesus Christ should be molested in their religion, or in the free exercise thereof, or be compelled to the belief or exercise of any other religion, against their consent; so that they be not unfaithful to the proprietor, or conspire against the civil government." Chalmers' Political Annals, p. 218. A brief account of the civil and religious institutions of the various colonies, from their establishment to the revolution, may be seen in Pitkin's History of the United States, vol. I,

ligion, that in some Congregationalism was established,\* and in others Episcopacy ;† in one State the Baptists predominated,‡ in another the Quakers,§ and in another the Roman Catholics,|| and in the majority, there was among the people great diversity of religious sentiment and practice. In such a state of things, what could be done, but leave the Church, as its divine Founder had left it, to be simply protected, and to take care of itself, in sole dependence on His blessing? A necessity created by Providence, chiefly in directing the influence of that love of religion which it had produced by means of the Reformation, compelled the full establishment of *religious freedom* ; for which the same Providence had now, for the first time since the foundation of the world, fully prepared the way, in the minds of men, and in the circumstances of the nations.

Such is a sketch of the developement, and full establishment in this beloved country, for the benefit of the whole world, of religious and civil liberty : all by the influence of the Protestant Reformation, and by the immediate instrumentality of the Puritans. Truly *they* were “the Lord’s portion ; the lot of his inheritance. He found them in a” moral “desert, and in a waste howling wilderness. He led them about, he instructed them, he kept them as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings ; so the Lord alone did lead them, and there was no strange god with him ;”—all “to do them good in their latter end,” and make them the means of unspeakable and universal good.

Of the numerous interesting reflections that crowd upon my attention, I will trespass further on your patience to name but one. **HOW OBVIOUS THE DEPENDENCE OF LIBERTY ON**

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\* In Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire. † In Virginia and New York. ‡ In Rhode Island. § In Pennsylvania. || In Maryland.

VITAL RELIGION. Without this, we have the testimony of infidels, of the highest distinction and authority, that the changes in the ecclesiastical and civil institutions of Europe, which began in the sixteenth century and have ever since been meliorating the condition of men, would never have been effected.\* The religion of the Bible, exerting its uncorrupted influence on the minds of men, produced the Reformation, and originated all the happy influences exerted by that great event upon the intellectual, moral, social and political condition of man. Their pre-eminence in scriptural religion carried our Puritan ancestors so much further than others in the work of ecclesiastical and political reform. Their love of this sustained them in their innumerable sacrifices and sufferings; impelled them in their unwearied search for the original and unalienable rights of men; and led them to discover, one by one, and assert, and successfully maintain, the principles of religious and civil freedom. This it was, pre-eminently and, I may almost say, alone, that fitted them for the ultimate acquisition, and enjoyment, and permanent establishment, of such perfect liberty.

How, then, shall we preserve the rich inheritance they have left us? By imbibing, and cherishing, and giving a controlling influence on all our population to scriptural religion. How shall we diffuse the blessing through the

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\* D'Alembert, a celebrated infidel of France in the time of her first revolution, says, "The middle of the sixteenth century beheld a sudden change in religion, and in the system of a great part of Europe. The new doctrines of the Reformers, defended on one side, and attacked on the other, with *that ardor which the cause of God, well or ill understood, is alone able to inspire*, equally obliged their defenders, and their opponents, to acquire instruction. Emulation, *animated by this powerful motive*, increased all kinds of knowledge; and light, raised from amidst error and dissension, was cast upon all objects, even such as appeared most foreign to those disputes." *Elements of Philosophy*, I., as quoted by Villers, pp. 397, 398. Says Hume, "In that great revolution of manners which happened during the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the only nations which had the honorable, though melancholy, advantage of making an effort for their expiring privileges, were such as, together with the principles of civil liberty, *were animated with a zeal for religious parties and opinions*." "In their circumstances, *nothing but a pious zeal*, which disregards all motives of human prudence, could have made them entertain hopes of preserving any longer those privileges which their ancestors, through so many ages, had transmitted to them." *History of England*, iii. 332, 333. And, speaking of the house of Stuart, he says, "So extensive was the royal authority, and so firmly established in all its parts, that it is probable the patriots of that age would have despaired of resisting it, *had they not been stimulated by religious motives, which inspire a courage unsurmountable by any human obstacle*."

earth? By extending through it the knowledge and the influence of scriptural religion. Not every thing that calls itself the religion of the Bible. Not a religion that brings the authority of revelation to a level with human reason, and knows not the meaning of Scripture, and attaches no special importance to any particular opinions, and takes away the sanctions of God's law, and the power of the Saviour's cross, and can accommodate its doctrines and practices to convenience, and fashion, and purposes of worldly ambition. Where had now been the liberties of the world, had such been our fathers' religion? Standing here in the full blaze of the light of their history, as patriots and philanthropists, how can I commend to you such a religion? No, my hearers, no. It is of the religion of the Puritans that I speak. A religion which made the plain declarations of God's word its authoritative and infallible guide; and attached the utmost importance to opinions; and would receive no article of faith or rule of conduct which had not the sanction of Scripture; and received unhesitatingly its every teaching; and viewed every thing as regulated by Jehovah's controlling agency, and developing his wise and unchanging purposes; and regarded all human conduct as bearing upon an eternal retribution; and lived continually under the humbling and purifying influence of the Redeemer's cross; and aspired to an assurance of an interest in God's everlasting favor, and to habitual and intimate communion with him; and for principle, even when involving no direct advantage, would sacrifice comfort, and reputation, and property, and life; and aimed, in all things, to exhibit supreme love to God and impartial love to men. Let this religion, any where, pervade the minds and form the characters of men, and they cannot but be free.

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\* "In 1772, about two hundred and fifty clergymen of the Church of England petitioned the Legislature for relief from the necessity of subscribing the articles of that Church, because that subscription was opposed to their conscientious belief. Their prayer was rejected by the House of Commons, and the subscription was enforced. Notwithstanding this, the petitioners, with the exception of Mr. Lindsey, clung to the emoluments of a Church, the doctrines of which they had publicly declared they no longer believed."



By your veneration, then, for your illustrious ancestors, by your love for your country, by your desire for the happiness of men, by the imperative admonitions of God's providence and word, we charge you, yield up your heart and life to the influence of the religion of the Puritans ; and do all in your power, by your example, your influence, your property, to maintain and extend its efficacy among your countrymen, and to diffuse it through the world. Suffer it not, when you can prevent it, to be perverted or reviled. Preserve its sacred regard for the institution of the Sabbath, that guardian of the authority, and chief source of the energy, of the whole moral law. Guard most vigilantly the independence of the churches, and their entire separation from the state. Do what you can to have all in this country, and throughout the earth, possessed of the Scriptures, and enabled to read them, and their understandings and hearts imbued with their subduing, elevating, and sanctifying truths. Fill this land with the religion of the Puritans, and its liberties cannot be destroyed. Fill the world with the religion of the Puritans, and the world is free.



## NOTE.

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It may not be unacceptable to the reader to add a few particulars in confirmation of the statement made on page 18, in reference to the influence of Calvin in forming the opinions and character of the Puritans, and thus contributing to the discovery and establishment of the principles of religious and civil liberty.

The peculiarities of the religious doctrines of the Puritans had an important influence in producing in them determined and persevering resistance to arbitrary power, and a successful vindication of their religious and political rights. This fact is sufficiently illustrated in the quotation in the sermon from the *Edinburgh Review*. It is admitted by Hume, and by all, whatever their religious opinions, who have thoroughly investigated the springs of action in those discoverers and founders of religious and civil freedom. But the doctrinal views of the Puritans were derived from Calvin.

Their disapprobation of the rites and ceremonies enjoined by the English government was a prominent means of leading them to the discovery, and stimulating them to the successful vindication, of the principles of religious and civil liberty. And that disapprobation may be directly traced to the influence of Calvin. With him many of the leading Puritan divines studied theology, and were taught the importance of laying aside the whole mass of Popish additions to the simplicity of apostolic worship. When the difficulties arose among the exiles at Frankfort, in Mary's reign, about the use of king Edward's Liturgy, they asked the advice of Calvin, "who, having perused the English Liturgy, took notice, 'that there were many tolerable weaknesses in it, which, because at first they could not be amended, were to be suffered; but that it behoved the learned, grave, and godly ministers of Christ to enterprize farther, and to set up something more filed from rust, and purer. If religion,' says he, 'had flourished till this day in England, many of these things should have been corrected. But since the reformation is overthrown, and a church is to be set up in another place, where you are

at liberty to establish what order is most for edification, I cannot tell what they mean, who are so fond of the leavings of Popish dregs.’” When the Conformist party had triumphed at Frankfort, they “wrote to Mr. Calvin to countenance their proceedings; which that great divine could not do: but, after a modest excuse for intermeddling in their affairs, told them, that, ‘in his opinion, they were too much addicted to the English ceremonies; nor could he see to what purpose it was to burden the church with such hurtful and offensive things, when there was liberty to have a simple and more pure order.’” The Puritan part of the exiles retired to Geneva, and there prepared and published a service book, in the dedication of which they say, that “they had set up such an order as, in the judgment of Mr. Calvin and other learned divines, was most agreeable to Scripture, and the best Reformed churches.” And when, subsequently, the important step was taken by several Puritans in and about London, of breaking off from the established churches and setting up a separate congregation, they adopted for use, (as they say in their ‘agreement’ thus to separate,) “a book, and order of preaching, administration of sacraments and discipline, that the great Mr. Calvin had approved of, and which was free from the superstitions of the English service.” Neal, i. 152, 154, 155, 252.

But most important of all, in its influence on religious and civil liberty, was the attachment of the Puritans to a popular church government. And of the origin of this system we have the following account from ‘the judicious Hooker,’ prefixed to his famous work on Ecclesiastical Polity, written expressly against it. “A founder it had, whom, for mine own part, I think incomparably the wisest man that ever the French (Protestant) church did enjoy, since the hour it enjoyed him. His bringing up was in the civil law. Divine knowledge he gathered, not by hearing or reading, so much as by teaching others. For though thousands were debtors to him, as touching knowledge in that kind, yet he to none, but only to God, the author of that most blessed fountain the Book of Life, and of the admirable dexterity of wit, together with the helps of other learning, which were his guides. Two things of principal moment there are, which have deservedly procured him honor throughout the world: the one, his exceeding pains in composing the Institutions of the Christian religion; the other, his no less industrious travels for the exposition of Holy Scripture, according to the same Institutions. In which two things, whosoever they were that after him bestowed their labor, he gained the advantage, of prejudice against them if they gainsayed, and of glory above them if they consented. Of what account the Master of Sentences was in the Church of Rome, the same, and more, among the preachers of



the Reformed churches, Calvin had purchased ; so that the perfectest divines were judged they who were skillfulest in Calvin's writings ; his books being almost the very canon to judge both doctrine and discipline by."

These statements are confirmed by abundant testimony from writers of authority who had no good opinion of Calvin or his principles. Says *Hume*, (*History of England*, iii. 57.) "These disputes [about ceremonies, &c.] which had been started during the reign of Edward, were carried abroad by the Protestants who fled from the persecutions of Mary ; and as the zeal of these men had received an increase from the pious zeal of their enemies, they were generally inclined to carry their opposition to the utmost extremity against the practices of the Church of Rome. *Their communication with Calvin, and the other Reformers who followed the discipline and worship of Geneva, confirmed them in this obstinate reluctance* ; and though some of the refugees, particularly those who were established at Frankfort, still adhered to king Edward's Liturgy, the prevailing spirit carried these confessors to seek a still further reformation."

The celebrated *Dean Swift*, in a sermon preached on, what tories and high churchmen in England have styled, "the martyrdom of king Charles I.," makes the following statements: "Upon the cruel persecution raised against the Protestants under Queen Mary, among great numbers who fled the kingdom to seek for shelter, several went and resided at *Geneva, which is a common-wealth, governed without a king, where the religion contrived by Calvin is, without the order of bishops*. When the Protestant faith was restored by queen Elizabeth, those who fled to Geneva returned, among the rest, home to England, and *were grown so fond of the government and religion of the place they had left*, that they used all possible endeavors to introduce both into their own country ; at the same time continually preaching and railing against ceremonies and distinct habits of the clergy, taxing whatever they disliked as a remnant of Popery ; and continued exceedingly troublesome to the church and state, under that great queen, as well as her successor king James I. These people called themselves Puritans, as pretending to a purer faith than those of the Established Church. And these were the founders of our Dissenters. They did not think it sufficient to leave all the errors of Popery ; but threw off many laudable and edifying institutions of the primitive Church, and at last even the government of bishops, which, having been ordained by the Apostles themselves, had continued without interruption, in all Christian churches, for above fifteen hundred years. And all this they did, not because those things were evil, but because they were kept by the Papists. From hence they proceeded, by degrees, to quarrel with the kingly

government ; because, as I have already said, the city of Geneva, to which their fathers had flown for refuge, was a commonwealth, or government of the people." Having thus stated the foundation and principles of Puritanism, the Dean proceeds with an account of its growth till the breaking out of the civil war ; and concludes the narrative as follows : " That odious Parliament, had first turned the bishops out of the House of Lords ; in a few years after they murdered their king ; then immediately abolished the whole House of Lords ; and so, at last, obtained their wishes, of having a government of the people, and a new religion, both after the manner of Geneva, without a king, a bishop, or a nobleman ; and this they blasphemously called, ' The kingdom of Christ and his saints. ' "

In the same way *Dryden* traced the origin of republicanism in England, as appears from his political poem called *the Hind and the Panther* ; in which he characterizes the Romish Church under the name of the *Hind*, the English Church under that of the *Panther*, and the Presbyterian under that of the *Wolf*. In the following extract, the "kennel" means the city of Geneva ; the "puddle," its lake ; and the "wall," its rampart.

" The last of all the litter scap'd by chance,  
And from Geneva first infested France.  
Some authors thus his pedigree will trace ;  
But others write him of an upstart race,  
Because, of Wickliffe's brood, no mark he brings,  
*But his innate antipathy to kings.*

\* \* \* \* \*

What though your native kennel still be small,  
Bounded betwixt a puddle and a wall ?  
Yet your victorious colonies are sent,  
Where the north ocean girds the continent.  
Quicken'd with fire below, your monsters breed,  
In fenny Holland, and in fruitful Tweed ;  
And like the first, the last effects to be  
Drawn to the dregs of a *democracy*.

\* \* \* \* \*

But as the poisons of the deadliest kind  
Are to their own unhappy coasts confin'd ;  
So Presbyt'ry and pestilential zeal  
*Can flourish only in a COMMONWEAL."*







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